

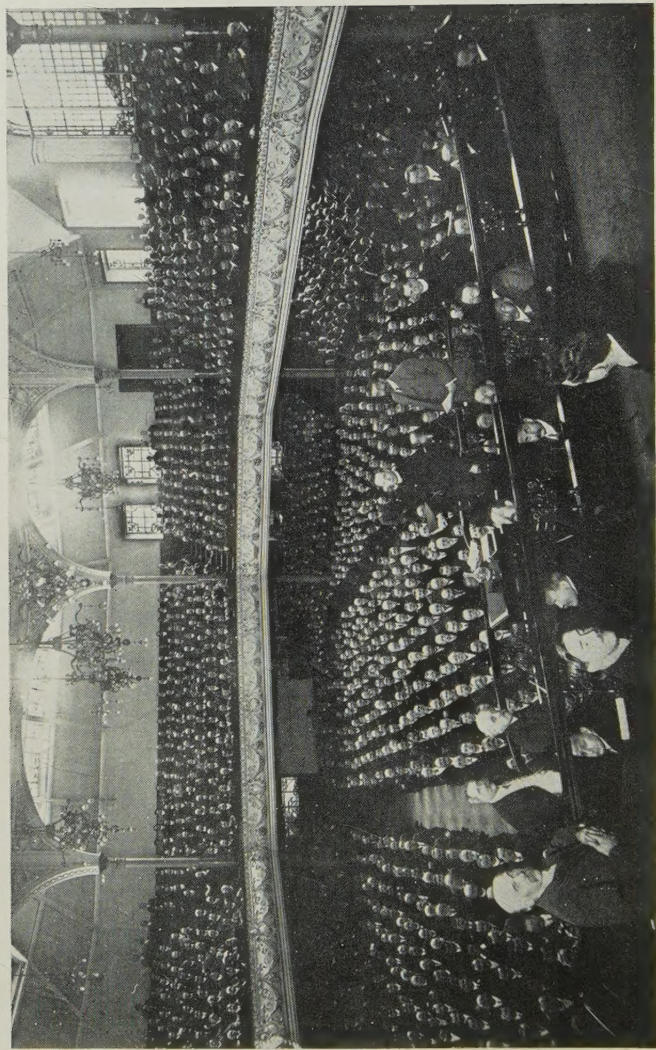
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THE THRONE WITHOUT THE CZAR



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THE EASTBROOK BROTHERHOOD, BRADFORD

[Frontispiece]

THE THRONE WITHOUT THE CZAR

*AND OTHER SUNDAY-AFTERNOON
ADDRESSES TO MEN*

BY

G. GILBERT MUIR

AUTHOR OF 'SHOULDER TO SHOULDER' (ADDRESSES TO MEN)

Where'er a single slave doth pine,
Where'er one man may help another,—
Thank God for such a birthright, brother,—
That spot of earth is thine and mine!
There is the true man's birthplace grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland!

LOWELL.

London

CHARLES H. KELLY

25-35 CITY ROAD, AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

First Edition, 1917

THIS BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
TO THE
OFFICERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE
EASTBROOK BROTHERHOOD
OF WHICH
FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS
IT HAS BEEN THE AUTHOR'S PRIVILEGE
TO BE
PRESIDENT
AND TO
ALMIGHTY GOD
IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE
FOR A PERIOD
OF VERY HAPPY SERVICE

FOREWORD

NOT one of these addresses has been prepared with a view to publication. They are simply a selection from those which have been spoken in the regular course of my ministry. Their issue at the present time is in answer to many inquiries for them. The generous appreciation of my earlier volume *Shoulder to Shoulder* and its ready sale encourage me to respond.

Most of all have I been influenced by the request of my fellow workers in the same field. Every speaker must discover for himself the line upon which he can be most useful, but he will not travel far before he learns that sermons are of little use for Brotherhoods. By overlooking this fact some excellent preachers fail in this important branch of Christian service. Nor will any man fare better who, in order to be effective, thinks he must descend to what is called 'the level of his hearers.' Experience leads me to say that the vast majority of the men who attend these gatherings are keenly anxious to ascend, and they will be quick to discover if their speaker is travelling in the opposite direction. The one thing the men should have, and have a right to expect, is the very best that can be given.

More than once have I known a vast audience rise spontaneously to its feet and cheer with mighty vigour. It has not been the promise of some sweetmeats or the assurance of coming social reforms that has made them manifest their enthusiasm, but rather the realization of what a man can be when released, by the Power of God, from the trammels of intemperance and vice, and set upon the upward road. This is the task the Brotherhoods at their best seek to accomplish, and for all other work life is too short.

I very gratefully, but quite inadequately, acknowledge the assistance I have received from many quarters. The addresses which follow bear witness to the fact. I desire that this book should be associated with the name of my departed friend,

THE REVEREND GEORGE EDWARD YOUNG,
whose ripened scholarship and saintly character have been so largely the inspiration of my ministry, and whose early removal has left me poorer in every sphere save in that of memory.

This book, like its predecessor, is sent forth to encourage yet more and more the work of bringing MEN to the Saviour, a service in which the rewards are far beyond the merits of the most earnest and devoted workman.

G. GILBERT MUIR.

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I

THE THRONE WITHOUT THE CZAR

THE unexpected happens ; the impossible comes to pass. Only those who live in the realm of the omniscient could have prophesied that in a moment, 'in the twinkling of an eye,' the Czar of all the Russias would be hurled from his throne. These are days when long distances are covered in short time, but the speed of the Czar's journey from the throne to the scrap-heap constitutes a record even for royal travelling. Whatever else may happen, the Russians have no further need for the Czar. It is difficult to estimate the full significance of the event, which has been accompanied by so much noise and confusion that many things are still obscure ; but the first fact to emerge from it all is that the fall of the Czar does not mean the fall of *the* throne. A government may fall, but government stands.

The great event reminds us of Isaiah's vision. He says, 'In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple.' Isaiah's eyes were not allowed to rest upon the empty throne ; they were

riveted upon the throne that is *never* empty. Kings may come and kings may go, but THE KING abides. Rulers arise ; they have their day and cease to be ; but RULE and AUTHORITY endure.

The Passing of the Czar.

‘ The Czar of all the Russias ’ is a high-sounding title ; it is synonymous with power and the right to rule. This monarch’s smile and frown carried life and death with them for multitudes. No Caesar of the Roman Empire exercised greater dominion than he. His palaces, his retinue of servants, the dazzling splendour in which he dwelt, encouraged the delusion that he might reign for ever. All this is ancient history. The Czar is no more ; he has gone !

No king can be established except in righteousness. Power does not mean permanence ; glittering garments are no substitutes for moral and political integrity. The Czar had great power ; he could be autocrat or democrat, whichever he desired, but he could not be both at one and the same time. The fact that he made the attempt broke down the ‘ divinity that doth hedge a king,’ and revealed his vulnerable humanity. So long as he was Czar he could take sides with Germany, or he could espouse the cause of the Allies ; what he could not do was to embrace both. No man—not even a Czar—*can*

serve two masters, any more than he can go upstairs or downstairs at the same time, or walk forwards and backwards in the same step. Yet he attempted it, and the machinery of the world is so constructed that it cost him his throne. This man loved the German cause ; but his people were set upon liberty, and their affections were with those who fought for freedom. The task God gave the Czar was to do right ; the task he gave himself was to serve the Kaiser and placate his people. To please the Kaiser he must deny his people ; to please his people he must deny the Kaiser. Whichever cause he had taken he could not have been charged with crookedness ; that only came in when he resolved to do both. This is how he made the attempt : he allowed his brave subjects to enter the conflict unequipped, without arms, without ammunitions, handicapped from the start ; they could not hurt their foes nor help their comrades. The Germans stood to gain, and he did not, he thought, stand to lose. If his had been the power of vision as well as of authority, he might have seen his palace walls blazing forth with the words, '*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*'—'Weighed in the balances, and found wanting.' He has had to learn in public politics the lesson he might have learned in his secret conscience : that the universe is built upon the throne of eternal righteousness, and that that which is out of the plumb cannot endure.

He has suffered the nemesis of his own crookedness, and has gone from the counsels of the world ; but THE throne remains. The signs of the times compel us to notice that kings are growing less. We have heard of the despondent cleric who mourned that ' all the great preachers are dead : Spurgeon dead, Parker dead, Maclaren dead, and I am feeling poorly ! ' So to-day the Kaiser may say, for the admonition of his brother monarchs and himself who are not found in the way of righteousness, ' Manuel has gone, Nicholas has gone, Constantine has gone, and I am feeling shaky ! ' The Czar has gone ; the throne remains.

The Coronation of ' Demos.'

There is no disputing the fact that King Demos has ascended the throne. How long shall democracy reign ? It all depends upon the democracy. What it must learn, and learn well, is that there is no more divine right in democracy than in kings. If it is divine right you seek for your government, then it can only be found in righteousness. Democracies can be as swiftly hurled from their throne as monarchies. There would be everything to say against monarchs if they were all after the pattern of Charles I ; but they are not, for England has had Victoria as well as Charles. There would be nothing

to say against a Commonwealth if all protectors were as Oliver Cromwell ; but, alas, they are not, for after Oliver came Richard ! Thus the unfailing law of heredity fails sometimes.

King Demos is to be judged by the same standard as the Czar Nicholas ; though Nicholas deserves more mercy, for he was born to the royal purple and could not help it. Demos demands his kingship, and claims the right to rule. It is to be hoped he will not forget the plumb-line. The plumb-line unseated the Czar, and can unseat Demos. Demos has come into power ; he is having his chance ; his power is greater to-day than ever. Perhaps I am short-sighted ; it may be, as the Scots say, ‘ I am slow at the uptak ’ ; but at the moment I am not elated by the signs I see. Surely Demos is having more of his own way than any other monarch that has sat upon the throne, but I am not impressed with the manner of his government.

We must be fair even to kings. True, we have many grievances against them ; but, after all, King George signed the pledge against intoxicating liquors for the sake of the country, and asked his people to follow his lead. They refused. In this respect let me place upon record that I was a great deal prouder of my King than of my fellows. It is an imperishable illustration that, for once at least, monarchy was right and democracy was wrong.

We are told that 'the public-house is more of a national institution than the Church.' We do not dispute it ; but it does not say much for the ideals of democracy. When theatres are crowded 'twice nightly' at a time when millions of our brave men are dyeing the soil of the Empire with their blood for our deliverance from a cruel tyranny, it does not say much for the fineness of feeling or depth of sympathy on the part of democracy. Even our French visitors are amazed at our levity. To be sure, King Demos has secured 'freedom of speech.' That is a glorious gain ; but freedom of speech may be fraught with infinite disaster if no care is exercised over what is said, or no weight of responsibility felt for the utterances given. Freedom of speech too often means the expression of those things which lower and degrade both the speaker and hearer.

King Demos has done much to secure the 'living wage,' an achievement of which we are justly proud ; but, after all, the blessing of the living wage is not complete unless it be spent in ways that ennoble life and minister to the highest needs of the community. A living wage, if squandered in the expensive ways of vice, will not make any desert to bloom and blossom as the rose.

King Demos has secured the recognition of the rights of man. Then more power to its throne, for it can never add to a nation's wrongs to clamour for

its rights. But King Demos must remember there is a priority in rights. There are the rights of property, the rights of labour, and social rights ; but before they can be demanded the rights of God must be acknowledged ; and democracy would have a more correct estimate of its true position if, when it counts its rights, it would also enumerate its mercies, which are far more than can be numbered. There is no more security of tenure for democracy than for monarchy apart from righteousness. If all democracy intends to do is to take the reins out of the hands of kings, as the driver of a social chariot, it will mean no betterment for the passengers who travel behind unless the chariot turns into new and better paths. To take the government out of the hands of the king and place it in the hands of the people is not necessarily an improvement. All depends upon the hands ; and if they are stained with the blood of men and are the instruments of cruelty and injustice, or if whilst building are building only for this world, with no thought of the next, then democracy also will fall, and great will be the fall thereof. Monarchies or democracies are of comparatively small account. What does count, what matters supremely, is the spirit, the motive, that reigns within.

The Ultimate Throne is the Throne of God.

To me there is abundant evidence that the hand upon the world to-day is neither the hand of the king nor the hand of democracy, but the hand of God. One momentary glance at the world's affairs may not appear to justify this statement ; but the pages of history burn its truth into the very soul of reading, thinking men. History is the constant inflowing of God into human affairs ; it is a civil theology, which is short of students. The teaching of separated, isolated acts of history may be difficult to understand, even uncertain in their meaning ; but there is no uncertainty in the broader issues. One wave may ebb, but there is no doubt concerning the flow of the tide. Have you thought of this world's reception of the Incarnate God ? All the powers of the world were engaged to extinguish that infant life ; all that malignity and hatred could do was done ; murderous emissaries were sent in all directions to slay that Child. The story is not continued as far or as fully as we could have wished ; we only come upon this comment, and are allowed to fill in the details for ourselves, ' They are dead that sought the young Child's life.'

Democracies and kings have sought to slay the divine, but somehow the divine survives. Oliver Cromwell said to the House of Commons, ' You trust

to your ditch which guards your coasts ; I tell you that if you break God's law it is not your ditch that will save you.' Napoleon was perfectly correct when he uttered his sneer declaring, ' I perceive that God is always on the side of the strongest battalions ' ; he was wrong in imagining that the strongest battalions were the same as a military host clothed and munitioned by the governments of the world. The strongest battalions are the untold, unnumbered, unseen, but not unfelt, hosts of the Lord.

I heard Sir Arthur Conan Doyle declare during this present War, ' I am not lecturing upon religion—I have no intention of doing so ; I only wish to remark that if you take the name of God and the word " providence " out of my vocabulary, I have no explanation to give of the victories we have had.' A man told me one day he believed God had ' gone dead.' I replied, ' To me God is very much alive.' For years we have spoken of ' the unspeakable Turk.' Events to-day make us feel he is suffering some punishment for his unspeakable evils. We know now something of the overmastering ambition for worldly domination that has been encouraged for years in Germany. To put it mildly, the signs of the times are full of admonition, and even the Kaiser is beginning to realize that he is not the ' ALL-HIGHEST ' after all. A few years ago the world rang with indignation at the Belgian atrocities on the

Congo. The pulpits of our country declared that for those crimes retribution was sure to come. He is a blind man who cannot see that the retribution has arrived. What about Britain's materialism, its enthronement of gold, its lavish expenditure all upon itself for its pleasures and its vices? Is there no punishment in the fact that the money so accumulated is being poured out at the rate of seven millions sterling per day, so that England is no richer but poorer for all its wealth? The Old Book is right once more, 'You can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.' To Him who sits upon the throne every knee must some day, willingly or unwillingly, bow. The old proverb has it, 'He who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock.' The apostate Emperor Julian had to declare at last, 'O Galilean, Thou hast conquered!' Behind king and democracy there is GOD, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

II

PREACH WHAT YOU PRACTISE

My subject has not escaped comment and criticism. Some have declared the cart has been put in front of the horse. Others have regarded the phrase as a printer's error, and have marvelled that it was not corrected to 'Practise What You Preach.' Others, again, have thought it was the speaker's mistake. So far as I know, only one man has penetrated the significance of the theme. He was looking intently at the poster announcing the subject, little knowing I was within hearing. He read the title over, 'Preach What You Practise'; then he significantly added, 'We should all be damned.' Whether right or wrong in his conclusions, he had at least rightly divined the meaning of my title. It had done precisely what I desired it should—it struck home.

I want to speak to you very pointedly upon what I have exactly announced: 'Preach What You Practise.' Sometimes our preaching is more orthodox than our conduct; heterodoxy in preaching is nothing compared with heterodoxy of life.

I heard once of two railway-porters who both

suffered from what an oculist would describe as a 'glide in their vision.' When their shoulders were burdened with luggage they collided with each other. One said, 'Why don't you look where you are going?' The other answered, 'Why don't you go where you are looking?' Precisely. When you say to me, 'You practise what you preach,' I reply, 'You preach what you practise.' I believe that as I pursue this thought I shall discover a most valuable bit of evidence for religion, because it proves that the only thing you dare preach in the world is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Try as you may, you dare not proclaim anything else.

Let me put it to you : Suppose you are pursuing a course of conduct which is diametrically opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, would you like to preach it, publish it, advocate it, and do all in your power to get others to accept it? I have read the life-story of Goethe, the German philosopher who said great things in the praise of the Christian religion and expressed many beautiful truths. The fact is that he preached virtues he did not practise. What he failed to do was that he could not and dare not advocate the conduct in which he indulged. To 'preach what he practised' was something he shrank from. I have no sympathy with people who want to cover up bad conduct by preaching a good doctrine they do not accept.

Away down in the depths of the ocean there is a species of jelly-fish which has peculiar powers. When chased by ferocious monsters who seek to devour it, it throws off a strange luminosity which lights up the surrounding ocean, and in this way it baffles and escapes its foes. I have known many men escape their pursuers in the same fashion ; they have thrown off brilliant speeches and wonderful gospel talk, but their purpose has been like that of the fish, to evade capture. To-day this is my theme : If a man desires to be impure, dishonest, and wicked, let him have the courage to stand up and advocate it and preach it wherever he goes. He will find he dare not. A man has no right to adopt a course of conduct that he cannot advocate. If he cannot justify his habits, either of drinking or betting, if he cannot face a congregation and advertise them, it is time he relinquished them. A man ought to be able to vindicate his own conduct. If he is in the habit of pilfering even coppers from the hands or pockets of others, let him look his fellows in the face and urge them to do the same, become his disciples and follow him. One who cannot do that is one who has dismissed all claim to intelligence. ' Preach what you practise.' I want to see how this will work out.

There is the Mean Man, who Wants Everything for Nothing.

Let him preach what he practises—the man who never gives anything except his advice which is not wanted, who never parts with a single halfpenny. I am not discussing the man who would give if he only could, but of the man who could give if he only would. Let him stand up and advocate his conduct ; let him seek to bring others into line with himself—refuse to help hospitals and other charities, and turn a deaf ear to every appeal for help. What is the result ? It means that we shall be faced with closed hospitals, closed asylums, and with withered benevolences. You dare not preach anything that brings about such disastrous results.

I heard of two young fellows who were in lodgings together, and as they were going home they passed a fruiterer's shop where there were some ripe strawberries. One said to the other, ' Let us take a pound of them home for tea.' ' No ! ' said the other. ' What is the use of spending money on strawberries ? ' Said the first, ' I am going to have some.' So he went and purchased. The point is that when they reached home the man who had not purchased them relished eating them ! If that is your line of conduct, do not hesitate to preach it. If, however, a man should eat that which he has not purchased,

enjoy that for which he has not paid, consume what he has not earned by honest purchase or toil, then he becomes a human parasite. Multiply sufficiently and you know the result.

There is the Selfish Man, whose Whole Creed may be Expressed in the Formula, 'I believe in Looking After No. 1.'

Then, lest there should be any mistake, he informs us that 'I am No. 1.' Very well, if you believe that doctrine, go and preach it, advocate it, tell every man and woman you meet to adopt your policy. Preach it to your wife, and say, 'I always believe in looking after No. 1.' Suppose you teach selfishness so well that she becomes your disciple and accepts your creed; then you will return home and find that your dinner is not ready, or your tea, and at night your bed has not been made. 'What is the meaning of this?' you ask your wife. The fact is she has accepted your doctrine, and has started playing your game. She will tell you she has been looking after 'No. 1.' How do you like it? How do you like your creed when it is accepted by others? How is it going to work out in the great battle of life? We call ourselves a brotherhood; but no man is a true member of this brotherhood who says, 'I look after "No. 1," and I don't care if the devil takes

“No. 2.”’ Imagine the disastrous results. Take my advice, and practise no conduct that you dare not recommend to others; find contentment in being able to preach what you practise.

There is the Immoral Man.

If such a one should read these words, I would say to him, ‘Immoral man, whoever you are, you preach what you practise!’ I once discovered a man leading a double life; he was maintaining two homes and calling two women by the name of wife. I went to him and invited him to address my Brotherhood. He said, ‘I could not; I have never spoken at a men’s meeting in my life.’ ‘But,’ I said, ‘I am anxious you should come, and I will give you the subject of your address.’ He said, ‘Well, what would it be?’ I replied, ‘Speak on “A MAN WITH TWO WIVES.”’ You should have seen his countenance change. I can see his face as it paled in front of me. I said, ‘Look here, come and tell my men that if it is a good thing to have one wife, it must be better to have two. That is what you practise; come and preach it; say outwardly and openly that you wish your mother had been placed in the equivocal position in which you are placing two women that you call wife to-day, and say frankly that you hope in twenty years’ time your

curly-headed girl will be in the same position in which you have placed her mother. This is what you practise ; preach it, man, preach it.' I had not the chance of saying any more. He had taken to his heels. He had gone. Within a fortnight that man had sailed for Australia, and neither one woman nor the other wanted to see him ever again. If you are living that life, preach it, advocate it. Dare you think what the result would be? What would it mean throughout the land? You may live this double life, but you dare not advocate it. You dare not, and you know it.

There is the Irreligious Man.

He says, ' I have no intention of being religious. I live without prayer, and I never read the Word of God. What do I care about conscience and the rest of it? I do not believe there is such a thing as conscience. Conscience only exists in the minds of preachers, and only disturbs those who indulge in abnormal suppers. Abstain from church and pork-pies, and no conscience will disturb your slumbers.' If you do not believe in conscience, do not wrap it up as a secret in your heart ; go out and advocate it, preach it everywhere. I challenge you to preach it. I tell you, you dare not ! If you are an employer of labour, preach it to your clerks, and say, ' Look here,

it is all nonsense ; there is no such thing as conscience.' Preach this doctrine to your clerks, but especially to your cashier. There will be some confusion of moneys at the end of the week ! In your business how would you like to preach what you practise ? The truth is that, whatever a man may do privately with his conscience, he is very anxious to have those men in his employ who have a great regard for the moral law, for the great teaching that has come down to us from the Mount of Sinai. That is what men want, and it is the only thing that is going to make our world fit for residence.

Voltaire did not believe in religion. I am not going wholly to condemn him, for there was much in him that I wish to see in myself and you. He did not, however, believe in God ; but when a visitor at his table ridiculed the idea of the existence of God in the presence of his servants he grew angry, and, dismissing them from the room, he turned angrily upon his guest, and said, ' If you teach my servants that, my life would not be safe for a day ; they would cut my throat in my bed.' Exactly. It is all very well denouncing religion, but when you denounce it to others you do not know what you are doing. The more disciples you make for meanness, or selfishness, or immorality, the worse it is for the world. There are people who deride the preachers of the gospel, who ridicule the Church and

all for which it stands ; but let it not be forgotten there is a direct relation between the gospel of Christ and every bit of holy wedlock in the land.

There is a direct relationship between the Church and every man who is living a moral, clean, and holy life. Break down this hall, put it up for auction, and turn it into a place of amusement absolutely divorced from religion, and what is the result ? It means that you will let the passions of humanity loose ; they will bound forward and overthrow everything that makes life a delight to-day. Reverse the picture. Enter the house of God with joy, translate into your conduct the truths you hear, and every vice will be swept away like mists before the rising sun. The more disciples we make for God in this sanctuary the better hope there is for the rising generations. We speak thus because we love you, because all your possibilities are linked with the acceptance of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel, and the gospel only, that can make the mean man generous and the immoral man moral. It has done it in thousands of cases, and it is still doing it.

I know not what creed you have accepted, but I do know that the only creed you dare preach is the one which came from the lips of your Lord when He said, ' Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and the prophets.'

III

EVERY MAN HIS 'BUBBLY-JOCK'

EVERY man is afraid of something. Many find pleasure in laughing at other men's fears whilst they conceal their own. I have known little men afraid of cows, and big men afraid of mice. If intimacy had ceased at a certain point, I would have said they feared nothing; but intimacy continuing, I have learned that they also have had their secret dread.

Every man has his '*bête noire*.' He may escape it for a while, and even for long periods live as if it did not exist; but sooner or later his terror finds him. The after-result depends upon what happens at the time.

A 'Bubbly-jock' to Every Man.

Let me explain. There is a pathetic story in Dean Ramsay's famous book *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character*. It is the story of a poor idiot boy, well cared for and tenderly regarded in his farmstead home. His every want anticipated, no work expected from his hands, it might have been thought that at any rate here was a human life

without a care ; but it was not so, for he also had a grave cause for anxiety. He dare not of himself cross the farmyard lest he should meet the 'bubbly-jock,' the Scottish word for our English turkey-cock. To those who encouraged him by saying he ought to be happy and contented he replied, 'Ae, ae ; but, oh, I'm sare hadden doun wi' the bubbly-jock,' which by interpretation means he was 'sorely kept under by the turkey-cock.' There is a 'bubbly-jock' in every life, something that every man dreads. The variety of the species may be legion, some may be worse than others ; but every man knows his own 'bubbly-jock' sufficiently well to take no liberties with it.

There are men who work with feverish heat all day because they fear being overtaken by sickness and incapacity before they are sufficiently protected against the 'rainy day.' Others in some unwitting moment have revealed the secret of their lives to another, with the result that they are living in constant dread lest he should make it known. Surely it is one of the earliest lessons of life to learn never to put yourself in the power of any man. I have known men, and have regarded them as veritable pillars of strength. And so they were until the day they met one temptation—their own peculiar temptation ; then they fell. If any other 'bubbly-jock' had come their way, they would have retained their

strength ; but the one they dreaded most appeared, and they succumbed. ' Every heart knows its own bitterness.'

Who has not known the man who has committed some evil deed, believing that profit would accrue to him? It has no sooner been done than the whole world has become full of accusing hosts, ' every bush an officer.' The sun that shone its kindly light upon him scorches his soul. There is a success which is a defeat ; there are prizes which a man dare not pick up. Some have possessions they cannot disgorge, cannot get rid of, though they know they are journeying on the road—and they cannot turn back—along which they will meet their ' bubbly-jock.' It is the spirit of eternal righteousness which has come to block their path. Every man has this dread presence to meet. It was so with Faust. He came at last to see that he had done all he could to destroy the edifices of the Christian spirit, the Christian Church, and the Christian home. He had been blind to their value, and had consented to their destruction ; but there came the day when the smoke of their destruction blew towards him. Then, oh, horror of horrors, he realized he had injured the human race, and he gave out one great cry of agony that he might be spared, if not to replace those haunts of the Spirit, at least to offer mankind some solatium. Faust fell back dead,

We never know in what mysterious way or in what incomprehensible manner we may be arrested in our path and be brought to justice for outraged truth and honour. Believe me, the men who have despised themselves for having knees, not knowing what to do with them, will be glad enough some day to fall upon them and say, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'

I have read recently the story of a man who gained notoriety as an artist and as a writer. Alas, he gloried in having written of the impure and in painting the suggestive and the vile. He was able to choose his place of living, but he could not keep out the 'bubbly-jock.' In his last moments of lucidity, before he fell for ever into unconsciousness, he wrote to a friend saying, 'I implore you to destroy my writings and my drawings; burn them at once without looking upon them.' Then he signed his name, and added to his signature these words, 'In my death-agony.' It was still another who had met his 'bubbly-jock' who said:

I've taken my fun where I've found it,
And now I must pay for my fun.

You have misunderstood my whole message if you have not discovered that it means that sooner or later every man has to stand face to face before God,

**Go and Meet your 'Bubbly-jock' before it Comes
to Meet You.**

Unpleasant tasks do not become easier by postponing them. There is no need to elaborate this point. When you owe an apology, the best thing is to offer it at once ; delay will make it more difficult. Already you have an accumulation of debts which are long overdue ; you know they will have to be paid, and yet the idea of payment becomes more and more irksome as time goes on. Letters that ought to have been written, services that ought to have been rendered, acknowledgements that ought to have been made long years ago, have not been escaped by being neglected. They are simply being heaped up, and they are quickly becoming 'bubbly-jocks' which some day will strike more than a passing terror into your heart.

Our Lord puts the truth I want you to hear in these words : ' Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him ; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.' I know it is hard, but it is easy compared to what it will be if you postpone. We are told that when bees find any offensive matter in

their hives they cover it with wax, polish it with their feet, and build their honeycomb over it. This is no doubt an excellent method for bees to adopt, but it will not do for you. The one thing you cannot effectually cover in your life is sin. This is not God's doing. It is the doing of sin itself ; it refuses to be hidden, and at length it will stand forth and say, ' You are my father ; I am your offspring ; you brought me into being ; you are responsible for my existence.' That is the moment when it will be vain to call upon the rocks and hills to cover you. Sin cannot be covered. How much better for you to acknowledge your sin, and say, ' I will go out now and face it in the light of God ; I will tell it out to God ' ! Then what the rocks and hills cannot cover the infinite mercy of God will.

You do not escape your sin by maintaining silence concerning it ; it is an old remedy that is often tried, but always fails. David tried it, and the only effect was to make him an old man before his time, for he says, ' When I kept silence my bones waxed old within me because of my roaring all the day.' But he did not mind growing old if only his sin could be hidden, if he could keep it to himself. Then Nathan, you remember, comes and recites the sin of which he had been guilty, as if it had been committed by another. David's face shows no trace of shame or reproach, for he has been so silent about his sin that

none could be aware of it. But Nathan pushes the truth right home until it rings like the knell of judgement through the whole nature of the guilty king, 'Thou art the man'! How much better if David, before his discovery, had travelled to the place of mercy and said, 'I have sinned against the Lord'! The day of judgement is not to be averted by wrapping up the guilty secret in your heart; it can be averted only by acknowledging your sin and suing for mercy. The one who has become conscious of some hidden disease lurking within, yet delays seeing the doctor, puts off the dreaded visit, pays the penalty in suffering greater agony and in having a lessened chance of recovery. Still more serious is it to postpone that one supreme interview with God which will secure the removal of your condemnation and win your salvation for ever.

The Providential Purpose Revealed in the 'Bubbly-jock.'

It produces fear. Yes, and there is need for fear to-day. There is no shame attached to the religion which from time to time has to make its appeal to fear. The shame is rather to those embruted and somnolent natures which can be roused in no other way. Some men must be made to understand that to play with the moral laws will bring about a

destruction of which they may well stand in awe.
Robert Burns declares :

The fear o' hell's the hangman's whip
To keep the wretch in order

That is no condemnation of the hangman's whip if there is no other way of bringing the wretch to his senses. It must needs be remembered that the supreme thing is not tenderness but righteousness. God's government is so established that He means to have it.

So much we miss if love is weak,
So much we gain if love is strong ;
God thinks no pain too sharp or lasting to ordain
To teach us this.

If loving invitations and gentle entreaties are interpreted as weakness, then will God smite with terror those who have so interpreted them. Men must be made to realize there is no fool upon the throne of the universe, but One who will yet rule the nations, if need be, with a rod of iron. Dr. Dale once declared, ' No one is afraid of God in these days.' There is much truth in the statement ; and it is more than a coincidence that the day in which men cease to fear hell is the day when they cease to revere heaven. This attitude of mind, however, does not dethrone God. You may sweep away in derision

both the words ' heaven ' and ' hell ' ; the one thing that remains is the fact that lies behind both. Those who fear God and obey His commands find themselves in harmony with His will, and this harmony is only another word for heaven. Those who disobey His laws find themselves in a world where everything is against them, surrounded with anarchy they can neither direct nor control ; that experience is only another way of describing hell. Accept the fact of the universe as it stands ; sin and suffering grow out of the same root ; it is only another way of saying God.

If you follow after that which you know to be sin, if you pursue the unclean thing, if you allow your imagination to run riot, it is not the ' bubbly-jock ' of the farmyard you will need to fear ; it is God Himself. He will stand in your way and lay His arresting hand upon you. You may have passed by Calvary and scorned the eternal sacrifice for your sin. You may have flattered yourself that you have gratified every passion and yet escaped the threatened penalty. Ah ! the time of escape has not come yet. That moment arrives when you stand your trial in front of the Great White Throne, and learn that He who was once your Advocate has become your Judge. Then you will learn, and that for ever, ' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

IV

DOES IT MATTER WHAT A MAN BELIEVES?

IN popular estimate few things are of less value than creeds ; men are too busy to be burdened with them. Of all ages the one most difficult to understand is that in which men were sent to death for their beliefs. Surely they were of no more consequence than the colour of one's hair or the size of one's feet. A man with no religious convictions of his own, but a good-natured contempt for everybody else's, does not find himself embarrassed in the work of life. There is no inconvenience in having no belief ; it means freedom from encumbrance. This is the attitude of multitudes to-day, and I would only affirm in passing that in repudiating expressions of faith they quite unwittingly declare their own.

There is no man living who has not some form of faith ; we all must believe something, and it is important that what we believe should be true and not false. We hear much about a decline in religion, but that does not mean a decline in creeds. The atheist or agnostic believes as much as the Catholic or the Christian Scientist. The only difference is

that one expresses himself positively and the other negatively. You do not abolish your creed, you only change it, when you call yourself an unbeliever. This address is not to persuade you to accept some dogma ; that you cannot escape. Voltaire, Huxley, Darwin, and Bradlaugh had their confessions as much as I have. One scientist declared, ' A man can do his duty without God,' but that did not abolish his creed ; it only formulated it.

The question we are often called upon to answer is, ' Does it matter what a man believes, so long as he is a good citizen, a faithful husband, and an affectionate father ? ' Whenever you are in difficulty as to how to answer a question, take my advice and ask another. I therefore ask, ' Is it possible for a man to be all these good things with a wrong creed ? '

Suppose a man sets out to build a bridge with wrong engineering theories, what is the result likely to be ? If he is mistaken concerning currents and wind pressures, about leverages and the properties of the arch, would you care to cross his bridge in a railway-train when a gale is blowing at full strength ? You answer, ' Certainly not.' Be careful, or you may be charged with being a most intolerant believer. You say, ' I mean to be intolerant where bridges are concerned.' The contention is unanswerable that a man ought to know his business and understand the laws of gravitation and

mechanics, because a false principle cannot erect a sound bridge. Orthodoxy is demanded from an engineer to avert disaster.

It cannot be less true that the man who is out to build a life must not only have a governing idea, but a correct one, or he will come to grief. I imagine you would advocate drastic action being taken if you had to sit in judgement over an engine-driver who refused to pull up his engine at the sight of a red flag under the impression that it was green. We are all very exacting where our bones are concerned. Men are, however, continually doing this on other roads of life than railroads. We are, therefore, trying to make it plain that it is not a trivial thing to select a creed, but of supreme concern to have a right one. Sincerity is a great virtue, but in this sphere there must be accuracy also.

A Man's Creed Matters to Himself.

You may think it rather a new idea to have to accept this. A 'briefless barrister' you may find, but, save in the imagination, you will never discover a creedless man, not even if you explore and search the world outside the Church. Nor can you find any help by saying any creed will do, that there is no difference between one and another. You might as well hold that so long as a ship has a rudder it

matters not which way it swings. In every department of life it is the creed that makes the man. It is his belief concerning himself, concerning his wife and children, concerning his employment, that determines his conduct. The belief he holds on these subjects will affect all his decisions and govern all his actions. Charles Bradlaugh was prohibited from occupying his seat in the House of Commons, because his atheism prevented him from taking the oath. In the acrimonious debate which followed one member arose and said, 'But, Mr. Speaker, we all believe in a sort of something.' This 'sort-of-something' creed will not do.

I hold that it is absolutely true that a good character is essential to a man who would be a good doctor. Let the patients be the judge; they will speedily assert that they would rather trust themselves to a physician with a great conviction than to one who has only scientific or medical interests. If you read the life of Sir James Paget, the great surgeon, you will learn that it was his sublime belief in the value of human life that made him leave nothing to chance, and compelled him to study and think and pray in order that the life of no patient should flicker out because of incompetence in him. It must make a difference whether we believe the grave to be a terminus or only a junction to something higher and better. It must affect a man's

outlook and determine his conduct whether he thinks this life ends all, or whether he believes that some day he must stand in front of the Great White Throne and be judged for the deeds done in the body. A man's belief does matter to himself, because from it his conduct inevitably springs. Only let it be remembered, faith is to be judged not by words but by actions. If a man says, 'I believe in God,' and yet in business acts or tells a lie, it is not his vocabulary but his conduct that declares his theology. In his behaviour he has revealed the fact that he believes in a lie more than in God, for he has pushed God to one side in order to tell it. When men *really, whole-heartedly* believe in accountability to God, their conduct may fairly well be allowed to take care of itself. It is when men *say* they believe, and *act* as if they do not, that there is need for the detective and the policeman.

A Man's Creed Matters to his Neighbours.

Some may dispute this statement; but when I reverse it and say that our neighbour's creed matters to us, it will secure almost universal recognition. Next to what I believe, there is nothing of greater importance to me than what my neighbour believes. All history positively throbs with this truth. It cannot be denied that the unutterable atrocities of

the Romish Inquisition and the massacres of St. Bartholomew's Day were the outcome of false interpretations of the will of God. The dull, harsh severity which marred the lives of the Puritans, and filled the world with so much gloom, was entirely the result of their distorted views of God. What untold sufferings the world has had to endure from men who have thought wrongly of the character and requirements of God ! It is cause for gratitude that the other side is happily, overwhelmingly true. Livingstone in his early days espoused a certain creed concerning God and his duty to Him which has blessed the world. Africa was redeemed by it ; it opened up the spring of music in the souls of dusky negroes ; it made the impassable forests into highways for God. The tramp which the natives were enabled to take from barbarous savagery towards civilization was as nothing to the march they undertook into the very heart of the truths of the kingdom of God. No wonder that upon the day when Sir H. M. Stanley was married, finding himself walking across Livingstone's grave in Westminster Abbey, he paused, and, taking the bouquet from his tunic, he laid it reverently upon the grave of the man who lives to-day in the lives of countless millions who have been redeemed from low and sordid conceptions of life, and raised into the very peerage of heaven through the creed he accepted.

Contrast all this with the German Emperor, who calls himself 'The War Lord,' 'The All-highest.' It is nothing to the point to say he is a deluded fool ; the point is that he has espoused his creed, and sets off to walk across the world as a colossal brigand. He will be stopped some day, not, however, in time to prevent the pages of history recording his deeds, or prevent him from being held up to the scorn, derision, and hatred of a thousand generations. The malevolence of the Kaiser and the benevolence of Livingstone may all be traced back to the creed they espoused. The one has scorched the world with his sin ; the other has enriched it with the dew of heaven. Accept the creed that God loves and that God cares ; believe that He calls you into His service and sends you forth to enrich your fellows ; believe that it is your work to uproot vice and to plant virtue ; and you will not reach your tomb without having learned that the creed you have espoused has caused your neighbours and friends to rise up and call you blessed, and that for ever.

A Man's Creed Matters to God.

This does not mean that no man can be saved unless he has in all respects an absolutely faultless creed. Indeed, the Church or Society may be rightly suspected that leads its devotees to expect it. From no lack of charity let it be said, and said

clearly, that the Church that claims infallibility is by that very fact farthest away from it. God is not affected by our faulty conceptions of Him ; these things affect Him no more than the spray of the ocean disturbs the lustre of the sun. God is concerned about our creeds because they determine the effect that will be produced upon the minds of our fellows who, if they are to be won to God at all, must be won through human agency.

Let me give you two illustrations of how God must be affected by our creeds. The first is from the life of John Wesley. He had his creed, and it turned him into an ordinary orthodox curate, wedded to the sacraments and to a service full of ritual ; but it was useless either for bringing joy to his own heart or to others. There came, however, a time when he discovered Jesus Christ as a living person, exercising Himself at that moment within him ; and the first result was, he said, that he felt ' his heart strangely warmed.' His heart thawed immediately, and from the exacting, punctilious ritualist he became a flaming evangelist, and went forth, as Mr. Birrell has said, to ' contest three kingdoms for Jesus Christ, and won overwhelming victories in every one of them.' That was a change of creed which must have rejoiced the heart of God, because He has brought the multitudes to see what a mighty God He was for the salvation and the redemption of His people.

The other illustration is from the life of John Henry Newman. We find him as an eloquent divine upon whose lips listening congregations were glad to hang in order that they might catch his words. But there came the day when the Saviour was relegated largely to the background, and the Church, sacraments, vestments, and ceremonies were allowed to take His place. I am not questioning the sincerity of the change; I am merely drawing attention to the facts of his life. The result is soon seen. He withdrew from the pulpit where men had been led to contrition under his ministry, and hid himself—not 'in Christ,' but in the cloisters of his monastic cell—and became the priest of the imaginary mysteries of the Roman Church. The listening multitudes melted away 'like a throne of ice on summer seas,' and all that took their place was the mumbling jargon of the confessional-box. That change of creed must have mattered to God, for it meant that a channel by which hitherto He had been able to reach hundreds of His children became closed. It is an awful business when God sees written across the hearts of any of His children the words 'No thoroughfare' in answer to His appeal that men should 'prepare the way of the Lord.' No wonder that after our Lord declared, 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die,' He should add the question, 'Believest thou this?' Is that your

creed—that out of dead, lifeless men there can come, by the power of the living Christ, a generation of God-inspired saviours who, as His agents, shall regenerate the world? If that is your creed, you have not only brought power into your own heart, but joy to the heart of God.

V

THE MAN WHO IS NOT IN KHAKI

THIS terrible epidemic of khaki makes every man who has missed it realize that he ought to explain to the world how he has managed to escape. It is not the man in khaki but the man who is out of it who must account for his existence. Some declare that they are 'conscientious objectors,' but that is not sufficiently explicit ; there are many different kinds, who are opposed to each other as much as the dogmatic adherents of mutually opposing creeds. Take my case for instance. I am a most conscientious objector ; but my objection is to the German Emperor, and not to the drastic methods which are required to render him powerless for the good of the world.

If you are not clothed in khaki, you must justify yourself. One man I knew escaped it for reasons 'he could not tell to the world.' He wished to do so, but he simply could not ; therefore he put an end to his life, poor broken-hearted man ! When all was known, how emphatically he was acquitted ! But it was too late. If only he could have elucidated

his case, the burden of the secret would not have turned his brain. I know another who is out of khaki. A few busybodies have called him 'coward,' and sent him anonymous letters, when all the time he might wear three golden stripes on his arm to publish to the world that he is no 'coward,' but has faced the foe for more than two years and been wounded thrice. He would wear his stripes but for the fact that he suffers from the rare grace of modesty. He says, 'All for whom I care know what I have tried to do, and for the rest it does not matter.'

There is no stigma attaching to the absence of khaki if you are putting your best, your very best, into national service of the highest and most necessary kind. There may be a few slackers in khaki, but there must be none who are out. The man exempt from the army must learn that he is not absolved from hard, strenuous, and heroic service. The only difference between the one clothed in khaki and the one who is not is that one renders service on the far side of the Channel, and the other has to do 'his bit' on this.

Britain's Foes cannot all be Fought in Khaki.

If Britain is to be left as it is, 'the boys' will return to a land that has lost its charm. It is the task of men outside the army to set to work to

redeem the homeland from the vices which threaten her ruin. To have escaped khaki is not to be absolved from service ; it is not even to escape the fighting-line. There will have to be warfare in Britain as well as in France if life is ever to be worth living again.

The immediate task is to develop a social conscience, to have an open eye to discover the reforms which are essential to a nation's well-being. While the men in khaki are fighting in the trenches utterly oblivious of all social cleavages and distinctions, should not the men at home be fighting for the adoption of a creed of equality, of social opportunity? It cannot be denied that we are witnessing daily a sharper division of the classes. On the one hand there is the immense wealth of merchant princes, and on the other an ever-increasing number of those who are suffering from abject poverty, and a not less number who can do no more than live from hand to mouth, to whom all thought of saving is a sheer impossibility. The division is made the more manifest and painful by the way in which expensive motor-cars are flaunted in the eyes of the poor. They are illumined with electricity by which costly garments and flashing gems are seen. Many may resent the statement, but the fact remains that such exhibitions of extravagant wealth become a menace to the State. They make men feel a sense of social

wrong. Nothing can be more terrible than for men to smart from a sense of injustice. If it is roused, in a moment of passion it may sweep all before it. Queen Victoria, in the early days of her reign, was accustomed to drive through the streets of London manifesting a lavish display of royal splendour, and at a time when the people were lamentably ill paid and badly clothed. Her Ministers warned her to avoid her excessive exhibition of the things she possessed, or the results might be serious. There is need for a repetition of the same warning, not to the King, but to his people.

What better opportunity than the present for men of all grades of society who are out of khaki to work for this equality of opportunity? Do not forget that the nation which has granted free education to its children is in duty bound to make it possible to secure, in moderation at least, those things for which their education has fitted them. This is the only way to true wealth and efficiency. Those who have wealth suffer no lack, and those who have not will exult over the possession of enhanced opportunities of realizing a richer and fuller life. Rich and poor will rejoice together.

In addition to this, how much the country requires a deeper tone and a healthier note in its national life! Do not be alarmed; you do not become sad when you are serious, any more than you become

pious when you are dull. There can be no harm in saying that so long as there is significance in life it is a pity for men to miss it, or to be under the delusion that they are alive because they scream forth unintelligent laughter.

No sane man would prevent an eulogium being uttered over the cricket-pitch, or the football-field, or the billiard-table. Indeed, the more serious and exacting work is, the more does recreation become a necessity ; the bigger the task, the more need to cultivate the moment of release. It is not, however, along this line that Old England is going astray ; the precipice ahead is the precipice of excessive sport and tainted amusements. A man ought to know he has no right to play at anything until he has worked at something, and that corrupted pleasures do not recreate, but enervate and desecrate, the mind.

All honour to the ' khaki ' who will free us from the malignity of the German foe ; but the men at home should seek the honour of delivering us from the deadlier enemy of intemperate recreation, which kills intelligence by destroying the power of concentrated thought ; and rescue us from a sordid stage and from a spurious literature, which only live by kindling passion in the realm of imagination, leaving one dizzy and intoxicated with evil thoughts. Oh that the men without the khaki would arise and

go forth to battle against the things that are destructive and unclean, and bring to the people of the land a life set upon great achievements, upon noble conquests, and upon the absolute destruction of Satan and all his works ! The men who will do this may miss the Military Cross, but they shall possess a nobler inheritance ; they shall in no wise miss their reward.

**There is the Call of Duty to which the Man out of
Khaki must Respond.**

The man in khaki has by no means the monopoly of privileges. Why should he have the monopoly of perils ? In ' Old Blighty ' there are difficult tasks to be performed and unpopular causes to be advocated. It will not do for all our courage to travel to the Continent and leave us here without. By what reason should you escape from the hard tasks that must be accomplished ? The greatest invitation Paul ever sent to Timothy was to ask him to take his share ' in suffering hardship.' What a compliment to Timothy ! It meant that he had it in him to suffer and endure. The man who invites us to a ' soft job,' or urges us to remain in unheroic service, must have a poor estimate of the stuff of which we are made.

What conceptions can fathers have of their sons

when they are always hoping they will have an easier time than they themselves have known? Are they afraid they will break or melt, or run away and leave the task unfinished? I was in the drawing-room of a baronet. It was magnificently furnished, and upon one chair, more comfortable than all the rest, sat a little boy of twelve years of age nursing a dog. The old baronet turned to me and said, 'When I was the age of my grandchild I had begun to earn my own living.' I could only reply that I hoped the more luxurious childhood would not mean a less useful manhood. There are multitudes who are out of khaki who have not yet awaked to the meaning of life, who are pursuing soft and sloppy days, but they produce no heroes. What a glorious thing it would be if men would only rightly respond to the difficulties and hardships of the hour! It would mean the coming of a moral race of giants into the world.

I have read that when that extraordinary man General Armstrong was first undertaking the work for the negroes in Virginia he wrote a letter to a friend saying, 'If you care to sail into a good hearty battle, where there is no scratching and pin-pricking, but great guns and heavy shot only are used, come here. If you like to lend a hand when a good cause is short-handed, come here.' Needless to say, it was an invitation speedily accepted. It

was the same kind of invitation that offered nothing but hardship and suffering that secured soldiers and loyal followers for Garibaldi. If only the men who are out of khaki will arise and give themselves with courage and daring to the great causes of the hour, there will be no need to fear for the result. It is the nonchalance, it is the indifference, of men that we have to fear.

The days in which we live are crammed with difficulties, with problems that will tax our bravest and best. But what an opportunity to rise to the heights of noble service! Do not leave all the difficult tasks to the 'khakis'; awake and take your share of the hardships.

Our great explorers and discoverers never stayed to ask the cost or to measure the sacrifice involved. The difficulties were the attractions; the hardships were the rewards. If either the North Pole or the South could have been reached by a non-stop Pullman-car express, many passengers might have booked their seats; but Amundsen and Peary and Captain Scott would have scorned to be of the number. If you find yourself in the very metropolis of evil, it is not for you to spend all your time considering how you can best preserve yourself from the evil, how you can best be on your guard, and settle down with the idea of being a good man in a bad place. It is for you to attack the evil, learn the

art of delivering the counter-stroke, and pledge yourself by the strength of God that you will lessen the evil. By so doing your own righteousness will look after itself. A youth, well known to me, recently donned the khaki, and has found himself in the midst of all kinds of evils and temptations, some of them of a very unexpected nature. His letter to me has not one note of repining ; he simply says, ' I will do my best to kill sin here before starting on the Germans ! ' I commend that method to you. These are the days when it is great to be alive. The histories of nations are being rewritten. We glory in the heroic deeds of our soldiers ; their courage, their light-heartedness, can never be fully told. I do not grudge one little bit the well-deserved plaudits they receive. God grant they may have equal cause to glory in the bravery and courage you manifest in the battlefields at home.

**The Man out of Khaki must Win the Victory he is
Eager to Enjoy.**

' A man is not crowned except he strive ! ' Upholstered ease, luxurious indolence, moral indifference, can have no future save of infamy and disgrace. Every link of the cable that is to hold the anchor must be tested to its required strain ; if it snaps, it

goes to the scrap-heap. The pottery that will not stand the testing of the furnace finds its way to the rubbish-heap. Not less is this a testing-time for the man out of the army ; if he fails, then he is of no service in the hour of the nation's peril. If our country is defeated, it will not be because our soldiers have been false or lazy or cowardly, but because the men at home, the men out of khaki, are content that others should face the dangers and make the sacrifices whilst they enjoy the victories they have done nothing to earn. It will not be the men in khaki, but the men in brown, grey, and blue, the men in comfortable tweeds and artisan corduroys, who will let us down.

I would scorn to take a victory out of the soldier's hands which I had no share in winning. Let those of us who have not had to face bayonets and guns and poisonous gas at least have courage to face and to fight injustices and wrongs that are bolstered by wealth and embedded in the selfishness of the race. There are kaisers in the homeland who must be hurled from their thrones as much as the Kaiser of Potsdam before the virtues and graces for which we long can have the chance of growing and of coming to maturity.

Recently I read a pamphlet in which a man grew eloquent at the thought of a day coming when London would be a city without smoke in the air, when

there would be no noise in the factories to destroy the hearing of the workers, no fog to stifle the breathing of those who suffered from weak lungs. He said the day would come when there would be open spaces everywhere for flowers and sunlight, the sky would be always pure, the Thames running below like a tide of silver. No wonder the man should grow eloquent over thoughts such as these. I submit, however, there is a grander ideal for London and England than that. It is of the coming day when there will be no workhouses, no prisons, no dram-shops with their accompanying vices, no barracks, no diseases which follow in the train of impurity, no policemen, no rags, no complaining in the streets. It is to be a land filled with music and the laughter of little children, and men shall really live as the sons of God. This is the ideal, but it can only become the actual by the *men out of khaki* arising from their sleep of indifference and saying, 'IT SHALL BE DONE.'

VI

THE PERILOUS FORTIES

EVERY age of life has its own pleasures, but not less its own perils. The temptations and pitfalls of youth have received abundant recognition. Preachers for the young are eagerly sought ; so much so that many have specialized in that glorious branch of Christian service. It is the man of middle life who would appear to have gone short of his preacher. Is this because men in mid-career do not want preachers, or is it because they have become so fixed in habit that their case is regarded as hopeless ? Whatever the cause, this is certain, that men in their forties need attention at least twice as much as those who are in their twenties. Middle life has its perils not less than the time of youth. It is not my intention to discuss when middle life begins ; you might be shocked at the discovery that you are already well on in mid-career. A man said to me awhile ago of another man, ' He is like myself, in middle life ; he is sixty.' I had not the heart to enlighten him by giving him a task in mental arithmetic and asking him to multiply sixty by two that

he might see how far he himself had passed the meridian.

Men of thought and experience know that a man's forties is the period of outstanding temptation and peril. Schiller says, 'The animal nature in man becomes dominant over the spiritual towards middle life.' Cardinal Newman has left it upon record that, unless kept at bay by high morals and religious principles, the flesh will submerge man's whole nature into selfishness in the period that is spoken of as 'middle life.' The perilous forties are the days when a man should be most careful of the guests he entertains in his heart. If he is not, it may happen that the results of years of struggle and conflict may be thrown away. It is only the man that endures to the end that shall be saved.

I can gaze upon the stripling oak and prophesy almost to a certainty what its future will be ; I can watch an infant crocodile as it lies in the water or basks in the sun, but I am filled with no sense of wonderment as to its future : the end of the crocodile nature can be prophesied from the beginning. This is not so with man ; he is subject to all kinds of tornadoes and whirlpools ; he has much protection to secure and much steering to do before he can be sure of reaching his desired haven. Suggestions and inspirations come to every man, which, if followed, will transfigure his character and fit him

for abiding fellowship with God. But as all depends upon what a man does with the temptations and inspirations that come to him, no prophecy can be uttered of what his future will be until it is known how he acts in the great testing days of life.

Unfriendly critics of our holy religion often thrust the case of David upon us, and say, ' Explain this : David, a man after God's own heart, and yet we are told that he was a liar and an adulterer and a murderer.' I only wish all the problems were as capable of easy explanation. There is a period of at least twenty years between the time when he was the man after God's own heart and when he had to be described by another name. In my experience, yes, and in yours also, has the case of David been repeated over and over again. Men do not always fulfil their early promises ; they turn off into evil things, or sometimes it happens that early years of vice give place to days of holy living and heroic service. Readers of George Eliot's novels must have noticed how she depicts her characters as deteriorating in middle life, just as if she were painting her own character in the colours of fiction. Not alone in fiction but in history do we find illustrations of the same sad truth. The early days of Nero, when under the teaching of Seneca, gave splendid promise of a generous and noble life ; but, alas, he lived long enough to belie that promise and to stand out as one

of the blackest figures in the pages of history. Another illustration is found in Henry VIII. If he had died as a youth, or even at the age of thirty, he would have been remembered as one of the best of monarchs, and would probably have been canonized as a saint. He lived too long ; in middle life he fell into vices which have stained his name for ever. In a recent number of a medical journal a doctor wrote, ' There is reason to believe that moral sentiments begin to decay in middle life as much as the physical.' The fact is that moral sentiments will always decay unless they are continually replenished and refreshed at the throne of God. I would warn every man as he reaches the perilous forties to be on his guard against the peculiar evils that are most likely to assert themselves.

We Speak of the ' Perilous Forties,' because it is the Period when a Man has Generally Become his Own Master.

When a man becomes his own master, it is surprising how lenient he can be with himself ; no servant could possibly wish for a more indulgent master. The man who has chafed and rebelled under the authority that was exercised over him, and obeyed but grudgingly the obligations that were laid upon him by others, now resigns himself to a mastery far more damaging and dishonouring to his manhood.

He speaks in glowing terms of being his own master. If he only knew it, he could not have a worse. When a man is mastered by his own pride, governed by his own lust, and entrapped by his own folly, surely he is in a sorry plight. The man who grumbled at the irksomeness of the commands that were imposed upon him from without now allows every part of his nature to have its own way with him, to do what it likes with him. His own sloth tells him to sleep longer, and he obeys ; his appetite bids him to drink more ; he is his own master and has no situation to lose, and meekly accepts the suggestion. Pride whispers that he can please himself, and has no need to learn from any one ; consequently he gratifies his vanity, and shows that he prefers ignorance to knowledge. There is no more perilous day for a man than the day when he rejoices in freedom from restraint and yet knows not how to use his liberty. No taskmaster the world has ever known has had it in his power to be half so cruel to his slave as a man can be to himself. Let me, therefore, beg of you, if you have come into the possession of your forties that you thank God for the number of years that have come to you, and show your gratitude by gladly yielding up your life whole-heartedly to the government of God. In this way will your future bring greater joys to you than any you have had or ever known in the past.

We Speak of the 'Perilous Forties,' because it is the Period when a Man Realizes he has Largely Reached his Summit, and Settles Down Accordingly.

Oh, the curse of settling down! When a man settles down he is absolutely done for; he is no longer plastic; he is stereotyped, rigid! The moment when a man ceases to imagine that he might yet be a hundred different things from what he is, he literally pulls down the blinds in preparation for his own funeral. Yet men talk in their forties of settling down, as if it were the approach of heaven. It is hell, and all the worse hell because they do not know it. I have known a man who for twenty years has talked of the great book he is going to write. The book is not written yet, but the thinking about it has been meat and drink to him, and I am confident he has fared better than the men who have never thought of books at all. The barber who was so constituted that he only had one dream—that he was a king in a royal palace—was not to be pitied. For genuine happiness there was not a crowned head in Europe that could surpass him. Night after night as he finished with his soap and brush he knew there was a period of royalty in front of him without its exactions and worries.

There is nothing greater than to have the mind furnished with noble aspirations and ambitions that

are capable of realization. It may be true that aspirations and ambitions carry with them a certain amount of pain, but they are growing pains. They are the birth-pangs of a greater life already in embryo. We are told that in countries where 'sleeping-sickness' is prevalent the only hope is to keep the patient walking about, to tickle his feet, to prick him with needles. These are doubtless painful remedies, but better painful remedies than death. I know a few gentlemen whom I should like to walk about or to tickle their feet or prick them with needles—indeed, all three at once—rather than allow them to settle down into the bovine comfortableness which is the only Elysium for which they long. Oh for a clarion call for all men in their forties, that they may be roused to a full apprehension of the joys, delights, and powers which await them if they will continue in well-doing !

Let every man in his forties cultivate every talent he possesses to the very apex of perfection, and then consecrate it to the highest service of God for his fellows. Awake ! There is still time to become a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

We Speak of the ' Perilous Forties,' because it is the Period when a Man Rejoices that he has Escaped the Illusions of Life, yet knows not that Life's Delusions have taken their Place.

Timber may be painted to look like stone, and

iron to resemble marble ; this is a delusion. To paint a picture, however, in which rocks and trees and skies are never mistaken for what they seem is illusion ; it deceives no one, but produces mental delight, fine feeling, lofty sentiment, which become incentives for securing great results.

Shakespeare and Tennyson, Turner and Handel, all had their illusions, which beguiled them on to mighty triumphs. Illusion is Nature's allurements whereby men are captivated by lofty schemes and inspired by great ideals, incapable, perhaps, of complete realization, but nevertheless spurs to noble action and worthy conquests.

A man may have large conceptions of his powers, glimmerings of coming triumphs. They may be illusive, but that is no condemnation of them if, under their inspiration, he marches forward to a life of utility and sublime service.

The man of forty is tempted to turn round and rend his illusions ; he has come to an age when poetry and sentiment and imagination are often dismissed. It is the day when the practical and the concrete must govern and control his outlook and his conduct. Did he but know it, he has dismissed his illusions only to be captured in turn by the world's delusions. The one is the window of the soul through which may be seen the land that is afar off ; the other is the prison in which he is manacled

to himself, and cannot escape from his immediate surroundings. He no longer sees the vast estates of enjoyment which he can inhabit in the wide spaces of infinite life. The bird in the bush is exchanged for the one in the hand, which—is the bird that never sings. Money is valued simply for its own sake. He purchases books which he cannot read, pictures he cannot understand ; visits the Continent, because it is the correct thing to do, but possesses neither the knowledge nor artistic sense to interpret the things he sees. O men in your forties, it is the delusion of all delusions to say, ‘ I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor and blind and naked ? ’ Change this for the grand illusion that pictures heaven in all its splendour for you, and makes you know that by the help of God all things are possible.

It is true some men degenerate with age, more men than the poet knew. Hood had to mourn the fact :

Now 'tis little joy
To know I'm further off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.

Before the Reformation the Pope sent a stinging letter to an English Primate—‘ To a most fervent monk, a warm-hearted abbot, a lukewarm bishop, and an idle archbishop.’ That man grew worse as he grew older. Godless men always do. But you

need not grow worse because your age is advancing.

What's a man's age? He must hurry more, that's all;
Cram in a day what his youth took a year to hold:
When we mind labour, then only we're too old.

Think of labour as service, as preparation for the endless day; and though your hair whitens, your spirit will become rejuvenated, knowing that every birthday is the passing of another milestone that brings you nearer home to the palace-chamber of the King.

No man will deteriorate with age if he has the love of God in his heart.

Grow old along with me:
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, 'A whole I planned;
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all, nor be afraid.

VII

TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

It is no use aristocracy and democracy despising each other ; they have too much in common. One believes it is his privilege to be exempt from the ordinary limitations and restrictions of life ; the other objects to observe the barriers which have been placed for his curtailment and restriction. Aristocrat and democrat unite in their antagonism to the barriers and limitations that arrest their course. The one refuses to see them ; the other decides to jump them. The identity is found in the result, for the effects of a fall through blindness do not differ much from the fall which comes from attempting to jump the impossible.

We live in an age when restrictive notice-boards receive scant courtesy. Sometimes they are ignored ; sometimes they are found lying prone upon the ground ; at other times left unpainted, and their warning become indistinct.

‘ Trespassers will be prosecuted ’ is the notice-board that is utterly out of date. Landlords have outlived their time ; their place is in a museum of

antiquities. No wonder men throw down the forbidding post, or throw mud at its lettering to hide its command. The only thing that must not be forgotten is that when a man has obliterated the offensive lettering which told him to keep to the path or he will be prosecuted and turns to look at the skies, he sees there written the same truth.

Think of the Limitations We Cannot Eliminate.

Much might be said in favour of the man who despises and destroys his Bible if by doing so he escaped the truth to which he so strongly objects. If he is a man who thinks what he is doing, he will soon discover that Bible truths are being expressed in newspaper English. The only part that is lacking is the word he can least afford to miss, the word of forgiveness for the repentant wrong-doer.

It is a pity for a man to see a right thing wrongly. If you are a great believer in your own liberty, and declare you have no intention of rendering obedience to the Bible, and that it was never intended you should live within the limitations of a cage, I would remind you that is entirely what the Bible teaches. It is the men who have thought and acted along your lines who have walked into the cage they were so anxious to avoid. I have seen a multitude of men in cages in my time, but they were all there because

they did not respect Bible laws. No one said you could not go where you wished or do what you desired ; all that the notice-boards taught was that you must take the consequences. Emerson puts it more pleasantly. He says, ' You cannot have the top without the bottom.' Of course, you can throw down the notice-board ; no one said you could not. What you cannot overthrow is the consequences of your act. One old Book I have read expresses the same truth thus : ' Whosoever breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.' If you have your way in breaking the hedge, do not complain if the serpent has his way in biting you !

Do not get angry with the next notice-board you see warning you to keep to the highway, but rather let it say to you that you are an inhabitant of a universe that is barred and bolted by law. Everything teaches this, and, alas, the truth is underlined and emphasized by the multitudes of broken men that are simply being thrown upon the scrap-heap of humanity because they are of no use either to others or themselves. The reason is that they have marched up defiantly to the laws of the universe and tried to overthrow them, and have been badly damaged in making the attempt. One lady from her writings would appear to have had a better experience. She speaks of Christianity as if it were a long and dismal tunnel, for she says when she gave

up Christianity she 'emerged' on the 'broad breezy common of Nature.' That is not, however, so tempting as at first sight appears, for the breezy common at best is but a shelterless place.

It has passed into a proverb with us that a burnt child dreads fire. That is, the child, having been scarred and seared once, has sense enough to keep away. A man is not so wise, for though he has bruised himself a score of times, he refuses to learn that the man breaks before the law. Truly there are limitations that cannot be eliminated, things that 'cannot be shaken.'

It is well to be aware of the boundaries that will not move. This is the sphere where it is an advantage to learn from other people's experiences rather than from your own. If you have eyesight and common sense, it is not necessary that you should prove everything afresh for yourself. The skilful mariners of to-day are content to steer their ships according to the findings of their predecessors in the art of navigation. If it has once been proved that a dangerous rock exists in one place, it is not at all necessary for you to run your ship up against it to prove that it is still there. In one of my books, *Ourselves and the Universe*, there is the story of a certain law lord of the last century, who had neither lived wisely nor well, declaring, when he discovered that he could not walk or sit or stand at ease,

‘ Confound these legs ! If I had known they were to carry a Lord Chancellor, I would have taken greater care of them ! ’ That means he would have restricted his menu and controlled his habits. It is not necessary for you to prove that the Lord Chancellor’s habits of life were bad for his legs and therefore bad for yours. The Lord Chancellor’s evidence should be good enough for you ; other things you may have to prove, but not that.

**The Sanctity of the Sabbath is Guarded by the
Fact that Trespassers will be Prosecuted.**

The Sabbath is guarded not by sentiment but by law, and to disregard law results in disaster everywhere to the one who does it. When a man was reminded that he must keep the Sabbath day holy, he replied that he was not going to be ‘ clothed in the twentieth century with the old clothes of the Decalogue ! ’ That really sounded as if he had a will of his own ; but that is not everything, cannot be everything so long as it is not the will of man but the will of God that governs the universe. No man in his senses would maintain that the Sabbath is to be kept holy in the twentieth century because God spoke the command in the days of Moses. The law has to be maintained because He who made it has never abrogated it, and because the necessity of the

law for the welfare of man still remains. Some try to evade the law by misinterpreting our Lord's words when He said, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.' God has surrounded the Sabbath day with the sanctity of law not simply for His glory, but for the everlasting welfare of man. God's anger is not kindled upon those who break His laws simply because by doing so they deride His glory, but because it dishonours and degrades His own children. Some imagine because they are overworked on the Saturday they can 'take it out of God' by pleasing themselves what they do on Sunday. The amplification of that principle would mean that if you had your pocket picked on the Saturday you have a right to pick another's on Sunday, a defence which would scarcely stand at an earthly tribunal, let alone at THE HIGHEST.

Some try to ease their consciences by pouring contempt upon the way in which the old Puritans kept their Sabbath. It may at once be granted that their way was not perfect, but it would be difficult to deny that with all its imperfections it was better than ours. It has at least this defence to offer: it produced strong characters, robust in righteousness. Such characters will never be brought forth by those who are advocates of Sunday golfing, or by any of the giddy, frivolous crowd that make religion a jest, a subject for banter or ridicule. There is absolutely

nothing to be expected from those who only make the Sabbath the most frivolous day of their whole week. Would any one believe that the idle rich motorists, with no pleasure beyond their reach, who drive with reckless abandon through our quiet English villages on the Lord's day, making a quiet Sunday a luxury unknown, disturbing the worship of those who have entered their sanctuaries, will be ever associated with those high moral principles which occupy the minds of serious men and upon which the welfare of this nation depends? 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' is only another way of saying that those who treat the Sabbath with scant courtesy will reap the nemesis in their own lives; they will have no sacred place within themselves free from the tramp of common feet where they can put off their shoes and hold converse with God.

In our great cities the authorities seek to secure parks and open spaces where grass and flowers may grow, and where the clogged lungs may inhale a breath of the country. And God has given to us Sunday. It is the open space in our overcrowded week where our wearied people may find their souls, may have opportunity to fix their minds and hearts upon nobler things, and breathe for one short day a serener and diviner air. Let this holy Sabbath be lost, and we are effectually imprisoned in a drab materialism which shuts off from us the sight of

God's stars. The man who knows no Sabbath *without* is the man who can know no Sabbath *within*. To ignore, to treat with scant courtesy and regard, the outward manifestations of reverence for God's day, inevitably carries with it the decay of the inner sanctuary of the soul; and when that goes what is left is not a man, but a corpse. 'When faith is lost, when honour dies, the man is dead.'

The Sanctity of the Marriage Altar is Guarded by the Fact that Trespassers will be Prosecuted.

Some there are who would lay their desecrating hand of vandalism upon the marriage altar, and, forsooth, call themselves reformers! They grow eloquent and pathetic upon the terribleness of being bound for ever in a relationship which has become irksome, the result of some momentary fancy. No one can deny these pathetic facts, these awful tragedies, the outcome of thoughtless, frivolous unions. No sympathy, no pity, can be too much, too deep, for those who suffer. This, however, is no argument against the binding character of marriage, but an object-lesson for those who still have marriage in front of them that they should think and pray, and not enter thoughtlessly into what they know not.

No man should read any book upon marriage until he has read the Bible; that is the greatest handbook

upon the subject. There it is taught that marriage is not legalized cohabitation, but a mysterious union ; it is the illustration which our Lord uses of the relationship which exists between Himself and His Church. It may be you are not prepared to accept this lofty conception of marriage from the Word of God, but you do not escape the solemnity or the truth of it by closing your Bible and opening your newspaper.

There you find the accumulated evidence of the accuracy of Bible teaching. In the Press we read the records of those who seek to break marriages of convenience because they have become inconvenient and irksome instead of enjoyable. 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' does not mean that if you trample down the marriage altar you will necessarily find yourself in prison-cells—though many have ; but it does mean that the enlargements and liberties you seek end in curtailments and impoverishments and desecrations too terrible to be contemplated without a shudder. Lay the hand of vandalism upon marriage, it means more than the snipping of the wedding-ring, though not more than it symbolizes. You cannot destroy the marriage altar and retain the sanctity of home ; you cannot degrade the mystery of marriage and retain the beauty of motherhood. Let your trespassing feet trample down the sanctity of marriage, and fatherhood will

be disowned, and the inhabitants of the land will no longer be sons and daughters with an instinct strong as life binding them to the holiness and beauty of home, but merely a miscellaneous population without union, without a common hope or the glory of a common goal which finds its completion in the great Fatherhood of God.

The Delicate Sense of Personal Purity is Guarded by the Fact that Trespassers will be Prosecuted.

How badly is a man equipped for the walk of life if he has not learned the fact that there are ways that are forbidden to every child of man ! God writes His flaming ' No thoroughfare ' upon them ; and just because this is a righteous universe wherein the will of God must be observed, the man who disobeys will soon find the arresting hand upon his shoulder.

The barrier that guards your purity is no granite wall ; it is as fragile as an insect's wing, as delicate as the bloom on the peach. Let that bloom once be removed, and soon the fruit begins to rot. One writer remarks that you never see a handsome face in prison. The fact is there can be no real beauty of face when the beauty of the soul has gone. Ruskin, in dealing with art and artists, says, ' The fumes of wine, the lust of gold, the stain of debauchery, impair the genius of art, and leave blemishes on

the pictures that destroy their beauty.' That is all true, and you know it.

A novel has been recently written, to show that purity may be violated when certain ends are in view ; that when a man has committed a foul deed he may look upon his sin as a thing altogether apart from himself, and flatteringly imagine that he retains nobility of soul all the time. Let me emphasize that that teaching is in a novel ; anything will work in fiction, but it is not true to life. This is the truth of life, the truth of God : that if a man disregards his limitations, ignore his boundaries, he will discover himself gripped by laws that cannot be evaded. Let no sophistry delude you ; let no brilliant colours or fragrant scents beguile you into the liberties and emancipations that wrongdoing would seem to promise. Wallace in one of his books tells how he saw a bird drowning in a lake, and was persuaded that the bird had mistaken the lake for the sky. Perhaps so, but it did not affect the result. It is horrible to talk of impurity, and may be unprofitable also. A better result may be secured by leaving the subject alone and by speaking of the opposite, ' Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.' The man who thinks truly and lives purely will be surprised on the hard ways of life with revelations of the Divine Presence which shall make him conscious of his kinship with God ; and

if there is a higher reward than that, I confess I have not learned it. The impure in heart shall see everything but God, and shall be led into places that are not good. The pure in heart shall see nothing but God, and His presence means no prosecutions, but the inheritance of a life of illimitable splendour. In the Divine Service we inherit a glory which is to abide for ever.

VIII

INCOME-TAX RETURNS

MEN seldom exaggerate their wealth when informing Government officials of their income ; that is the moment when the boastful man forgets to boast. Through the year he may have enjoyed dazzling his neighbours by his prosperity ; now he is eager to impress the tax-gatherers with the meagreness of his possessions.

**There is the Man who Belittles his Possessions,
but Magnifies the Things he Lacks.**

He resembles the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son, who, having enjoyed from his youth the abundance of his father's home and been a stranger to want, yet groans out his complaint, 'Thou never gavest me a kid.' That is surely an ancient illustration of a modern custom. There are too many who, forgetting their possessions, are ever dwelling complainingly upon the insignificant things they lack. The elder brother has numerous descendants, and in all are the same well-marked family

features: they overlook fatherhood and love, health and comfort, whilst they murmur that 'they have no kid.' If they had, it would only go to increase their disparaged abundance, and their greedy heart would fix upon some other object, which in turn would be cherished until received—and then forgotten for ever.

There are many who obey the apostle's injunction, in a most unapostolic way, to 'look . . . on the things of others.' Ahab did, when he failed to regard his own wonderful inheritance and looked with envious eyes upon Naboth's vineyard. His own possessions were as nothing; it was the estate of another that fired and inflamed his greedy heart. Alexander the Great did, when he was discontented with his imperial palace at Babylon because he could not get ivy to grow upon its walls. The Babylonian palace was nothing to him, though birds of exquisite plumage and inimitable song nestled in his gardens, and flowers of every hue and fragrance adorned them. He belittled all, forgot all, parted with all, because the coveted ivy would not grow. We have heard of one noble lord of our own time whose life is shadowed because he cannot persuade rooks to build their nests in his trees. He has been present at the coronations of kings and entertained princes, but he is discontented because rooks will not accept anything from him. He was determined

to have a rookery, and in desperation purchased an estate where rooks were pleased to dwell and utter their 'caw, caw.' The transaction, however, was no sooner over than the rooks forsook their haunts and fled, leaving no explanation of their departure. It can but be surmised they objected to their new landlord. The great nobleman was thwarted, and left with only disappointment over what he had not. If men would estimate their wealth by what they have rather than by what they have not, it would be wellnigh impossible to find a poor man.

Hosts of men would never have known themselves poor if they had not seen another's wealth. How proud you have been of your house, the house for which you laboured and which you furnished and decorated with love, the house in which you have had abounding health ! Every child born to you has increased the attractiveness of your home, and you have had cause to rejoice in the goodness of God. Then came the day when the furniture-van stood at your neighbour's door to take his goods to a larger and more fashionable house. You complain he has had a stroke of fortune which has not come to you, but forget that he has taken two of his children to the graveyard and that no fortune can bring them back. Yet you make yourself miserable because you have not what he possesses ; you are irritated, and tell your patient, happy, singing wife that if you have to

live any longer in these small, cramped rooms you will choke. You never knew the rooms were small until you saw the furniture-van at your neighbour's door, and the choking sensation was never felt at your throat until envy gripped your heart.

O man, are not a loving wife, happy, merry bairns, and abounding health enough to be glad about, enough to make you feel rich? Why need you spoil it all by bringing out the measuring-tape to learn the size of your rooms in feet and inches?

It may be you have been reading of the brilliant things that are done in the world, of the discoveries made, the pictures painted, the triumphs won, and you have become greedy and discontented. You are asking why God has not baptized you with genius like unto some of your fellows, why He has not caused you to have a place among the shining host. You forget to be thankful for the good square head of common sense that God has placed upon your shoulders; there is surely room for gratitude there. If you doubt it, ask your wife. There are few wives who would ask a genius for their husband. Common sense is better to live with any day than genius, and that is something. Genius never goes to bed at the proper time or gets up at the proper time, and never does anything else in the ordinary way. It is true you may expect surprises, but they may not all be welcome ones. Genius may be brilliant, it may be

sparkling in its splendour, but you have paid too dearly for it if you have missed the more ordinary but most valuable gift of common sense. There are days when sound judgement may be worth more than genius. You must not complain as if God had forgotten to be gracious to you. Enough has been said to make you think more of the blessings you have than to mourn the things you appear to lack.

There is the Man who Refuses to Call Himself Rich when he only Possesses those Things which are held in Partnership with the Race.

Before he can rejoice over anything he wants to feel that it has been withdrawn from every one else. He calls it his only when it has been separated from the common stock. He will not call himself rich over possessions which are shared by others. He espouses the creed of Mr. Pecksniff, who said, 'Unless some of us are better off than others, what will become of gratitude?'

We have fallen to a sorry depth if we can only think ourselves rich when we gaze upon the poverty of others. I have been told that the entry of a third-class passenger into a first-class carriage spoils the pleasure of the passengers who are in already. They never show a cheerful face, because another is to share the enjoyment of the comfortable upholstery. There is nothing like the knowledge of an

overcrowded third-class carriage for increasing the enjoyment of those who are in a half-empty first. Poor humanity !

Nevertheless it is true that the possessions which are enjoyed by most mean most to the world to-day. For the life of me I cannot understand why a man should not walk with elastic step, with a great shining look of joy upon his face, because he is an absolute millionaire in health, his digestive organs in perfect condition, can go through a day's work without being tired, fall asleep without a moment's delay, and arise to greet a new day with all the freshness of the morning upon him. The man who cannot rejoice over that incalculable wealth and call himself rich in its inheritance all because his neighbour over the road has the same possession is unspeakably unworthy of the gift. Why a man should not feel delight because he can see the stars that shine in the heavens I cannot imagine.

My joy is boundless that God has said to all the multi-millionaires of the world concerning the stars, 'Hands off !' If He had not, they would have been torn from the heavens and dispatched to the neighbourhoods of the wealthy, and to the iniquity of land-lords would have been added the greater iniquity of 'star-lords' also. Poor men then would never have been able to look up into the star-spangled sky and read there the story of unfailing

providence and love ; they would have looked up and have seen the blackness of despair instead of the radiancy of hope. God has seen to it that the man who owns the land shall have no monopoly of seeing the landscape ; that glorious gift He has scattered freely amongst the sons of men.

How partial some men would have God to be ! I have known a man who wintered in the South of France as a cure for sciatica and lumbago. He wrote home that he was improving rapidly, was able to dress on the balcony, enlarged upon the expensive nature of the treatment, went into raptures over the warmth of the sun and the amazing clearness of the skies. When, however, his poor relations in the South of England informed him that they were enjoying the same wonderful sunshine and the same clearness of skies for nothing, his joy was turned into mourning ; he began to grumble at the unnecessary expense to which he had been put, so that the sciatica and lumbago threatened to return. The joy of having a good cigar is nothing compared with the joy of having one better than anybody else. You will be ready to sing the *Magnificat* when you have learned that God has ordained that the things which are essential to the well-being of the race are not allowed to be the perquisites of the few, but the abounding possessions of the many.

**God Teaches that a Man is only Rich when he
Partakes of the Father's Wealth.**

Anyway, there is no real contentment in any other. In every man's heart, whether rich or poor, there is the fundamental knowledge that inequality and slavery are enemies to the human race. There is no rallying call for the masses of the country which does not include the promise of liberty and equality ; we feel instinctively that slavery and inequality are the enemies of our humanity. Then do not forget that the more you travel from love the farther you travel from the goal you seek. It is only as you reach the Father's heart that you begin to realize the possession of true happiness. Slavery and inequality can be slain by nothing but love. I marvel that men should denounce the Church as ' autocratic,' ' aristocratic,' and I do not know what besides. I tell you there is no such democratic institution in this world as the Church which enshrines the love of God. Carlyle tells us, ' Democracy was born not at Bunker's Hill, but at Bethlehem ' ; and Bethlehem is neither more nor less than the mightiest expression of the love of God to man the world has ever known. Crowd round Bethlehem, and you will catch the heart-beats of the Eternal Father ; listen to the angel messengers, and you will learn there, as nowhere else in the world, the inheritance to which

you are called. Oh, learn it now, the sooner the better, that there is one vast monopoly of wealth which can never be broken down. All *true* wealth, wealth that will last, wealth that will satisfy, belongs alone to those who are the sons of God. By faith you may now become a son of God. Let that be accomplished, and you will soon hear the Father's voice saying, 'Son, thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is THINE.'

IX

‘I AM ALL RIGHT’

‘It never rains but it pours!’

So it happened to me. Many people may have said that they are ‘all right’; but it never made any deep impression until, as prison chaplain, it was my duty to visit prisoners in their cells. I went into one cell where a youth of twenty was engaged in his prison task. I said to him, ‘How are you?’ He immediately replied, ‘I’m all right.’ I was so staggered by the reply that I asked, ‘Then why are you here?’ He replied, ‘Because I stole a watch.’ ‘Then where is the watch?’ He said, ‘I don’t know.’ ‘But you told me you stole it; where is it?’ Again he replied, ‘I don’t know; I did not get it.’ ‘Then what did you get?’ He said, ‘Nine months.’ This startled me, for here was a youth telling me that though he stole a watch, he did not get the watch, but got nine months instead; and yet he assured me he was ‘all right’!

I went to another cell where there was an old forger sitting. I said, ‘How are you?’ and he replied, ‘I’m all right.’ I put my hand to my forehead to gather my wits about me. I wondered if I

was in the midst of some delusion or if there was something wrong with myself. So I said, 'Friend, for what purpose are you here?' He answered, 'I forged a cheque, but I got no money.' 'Then what did you get?' He said, 'Eighteen months.' Yet he was 'all right'! As I left the prison that day musing upon the 'all-right' men in the all-wrong place, I met a man sadly lacking in his faculties. He had only one leg and one eye that had a way of looking all its own. I inquired from this man, whom I knew well, how he was, and he said, 'I'm all right.' Then as I journeyed on I thought of wise old Socrates who taught that to use a word wrongly creates an error in the soul. I understood how many of us may get on wrong tracks by using words wrongly. I have read of a man who complained that he was suffering from rheumatism, sciatica, dropsy, and seven other complaints, but that otherwise he was all right. I have a respect for that man; he was struggling to be an optimist. I have also a respect for the curate who assured his landlady that the egg she had boiled for him was 'all right in parts.' That man was endeavouring to be truthful. The man who was being sentenced to a term of imprisonment tried to find the best in himself when he assured the judge that he was 'all right in his principles,' but he was discouraged when he was told that he was not being punished for his

principles, but for his practices. You will see now what I mean by quoting the proverb, ‘ It never rains but it pours.’ I have had more than enough of people assuring me that they are ‘ all right ’ when, unless my reason is terribly at fault, instead of being ‘ all right,’ they are very far wrong.

Man is made up of many compartments, and it is premature for him to claim that he is ‘ all right ’ until he has examined himself in every part. It may be true that there are vessels with water-tight compartments, one or two of which may be damaged without the whole being affected. With man this is not the case. He cannot be damaged in one part of his nature without being damaged all round—at least, to the extent of making it impossible for him to say that he is ‘ all right.’

All Right—but Poor at Work.

We have so often said that we are ‘ all right ’ that we have come to believe it, and it comes with something like a shock to us when a little examination reveals that we are not quite so free from flaws and blemishes as we imagined. A man came to me in search of work. I asked him what he could do. He unhesitatingly assured me that he could turn his hand to anything. A little questioning revealed the fact that he could do nothing but lay claim to

virtues and qualifications which he did not possess. I do wish men would learn that no man can be 'all right' who does not seek to fit himself for the world in which he lives. How can a man be 'all right' when half his tools are in the pawnshop and the other half he scarcely knows how to use, when the work he does is poor, and he is incapable of gripping his task with firmness and intelligence? Once I went to see a man who advertised himself by a swinging signboard over his door as a 'General Jobber'! As soon as I saw the man I recognized the resemblance he bore to his advertisement. The man was loose in jaw and limb. The glance of a moment revealed the fact that that man would never get his saw in a niche and stick at it until his saw was through. No man can be 'all right' who has not learned the lesson of concentration, who knows not how to cleave to his work, and has not learned that the way of promotion does not lie along the line of resignations, 'throwing up,' and strikes, but in qualifying himself to excel in the post at which he is found. No man can be 'all right' until his work is all right. What an abuse it is of human language when a man turns out scamped work, or must have constant recourse to shellac to fill up and conceal the blemishes of his own labour, yet presumes to say that he is 'all right'! I believe that work is the expression of a man's very self. A man cannot build a

house or make a chair or table without to some extent revealing his own personality. Let us at least learn this lesson, that when a man's work is all wrong he should hesitate to call himself ‘ all right.’

All Right—but Never Reads.

Once again, there is the man who presumes to call himself ‘ all right ’ and yet in his life he has never read one solid book or ever given his brain the task of working out one serious problem. It is a little difficult to discover why some men have heads at all, except that it is the place where the mouth is situated, which is in constant service. Scientists give us innumerable illustrations of instances where faculties which, left unused, become atrophied and lost. Some day we shall arise and see a headless population about us. In a great factory in the North of England one workman was very severely handled by his mates because they said he was ‘ too big for his boots.’ The way the man was treated was a revelation of the serious light in which his crime was regarded. It may have been a crime, but, after all, I have more respect for the man who is too big for his boots than I have for the man whose head is too small for his hat ; and, alas, it is the commoner crime of the two.

Sir John Lubbock tells that upon one occasion he

entertained a South Sea Islander, who had recently come to this country, to lunch. When the repast was over, Sir John sought to lead his guest into some intellectual paths, only to find that he had fallen into a deep slumber. As it was useless to keep up a conversation with a man who was asleep, he left the room, and returned just as the Southerner was returning from the land of dreams. He apologized to his host by saying how sorry he was to have so acted, 'but,' said he, 'the fact is, thinking always makes me sleepy.' I fear he is not the only man who has found thinking a fine cure for insomnia.

The vast multitude of men live and die without discovering the great headpiece that God has given to them, capable of 'thinking God's thoughts after Him.' I never knew until recently that there was a weekly newspaper called *Ideas*. I made the discovery in this way. I heard a passenger call out to the man at a railway bookstall, 'Have you any *Ideas*?' 'No,' said the man; 'sold out.' I fear with multitudes that is the real tragedy; they have sold out, they have no ideas. How can they have when they never read anything beyond the betting news of the evening papers; never study anything but the lowest writing imaginable? I wish that every man who believes in gymnastics for the muscles would try them for his brain. I must leave it to him whether he will or not, but at least it is

an impertinence to say that he is ‘ all right ’ until he does.

All Right—but Pay no Debts.

We hear men lay the flattering tribute to themselves that they are ‘ all right,’ whilst we know that if their tailor, milkman, or butcher were asked concerning them they would give a very different verdict. I remember being once greatly startled by hearing a good Christian baker say, when he was speaking of heaven, ‘ When I get there I shall see lots of people who owe me for bread.’ At first I admired the wonderful charity of his heart, but afterwards I questioned the accuracy of his eschatology. I do not accept the view that men who die without discharging their obligations to their tradesmen are to be welcomed as white-robed saints in the place where character is the supreme qualification.

I have known a man very fond of declaring that he would not like to walk in anybody else’s shoes, but if report spoke truly he never walked in his own—that is, of course, upon the assumption that shoes only become your own when you have paid for them. I have known men parade on the same principle in other people’s clothes and grow fat upon other people’s food. I tell you that no one is ‘ all right ’ until he has discharged his obligations to his fellows. The man who is exacting to a degree in the duties

of others towards himself, grows sulky over all kinds of imagined slights and wrongs done to him, and yet never does one thing to make life either better or easier or gladder for another, may be many things in the world ; but there is one thing that he cannot be, and that is ' ALL RIGHT.'

All Right—but Without God.

Worst of all is it when a man calls himself ' All right ' and yet he has never once brought God into his reckoning. I have read somewhere that upon one occasion George III sent for William Herschel to have audience with him at Windsor Castle in order that the astronomer might show and explain to him some of his wonderful astronomical discoveries. The astronomer soon became conscious of his own importance, and, with a due sense of his dignity, presented himself at the Castle. When he was ushered into the presence of the King, he immediately began unrolling his maps and charts, that no time might be lost in instructing his royal master. There came, however, an unexpected interruption. ' Stop ! ' said the King. ' Before you deal with the stars I must deal with a deserter from my Navy.' Herschel turned pale before the King ; conscience had interpreted the meaning of the Sovereign. Said King George, ' Before you became an astronomer you were in my Navy, and deserted from it.

The astronomical business can wait, but it is imperative that I deal with you first as a deserter.’ He then handed Herschel a written pardon with the royal signature affixed. The King was right : there could be no dealings between himself and his subject until the past had been rectified.

In like manner many a man, proud in his achievements, is inclined to forget the past chapters of his life, and, imagining that he could dodge the accountant and the magistrate, that therefore he is ‘ all right.’ Many a man allows himself to swell with pride because he has escaped the policeman. I tell you nay ; we must get farther back, and learn that there is a court that deals with motive, an unseen tribunal which tries you, not in relationship to the laws of earth, but of heaven and of God. No man is ‘ all right ’ until his nature opens up to the Divine Spirit, until he turns to God who made him, and responds to the love that is waiting to adopt him into the divine family. A man is ‘ all right,’ not by seeking the road back to innocence—that can never be—but when, recognizing that he has sinned, he puts himself all right with God by seeking forgiveness through the appointed sacrifice, and through Christ rises back to the estate that he had lost. Then he has been born again, entered into the inheritance that is to abide for ever. Then, but not till then, may a man say that he is ‘ ALL RIGHT.’

X

WHY DOES NOT GOD INTERVENE?

WHY does not God intervene? That is the question which arises from thousands of hearts. Some ask it only in scepticism and scorn; others in infinite agony, and are dismayed at the silence.

Once I read a book in which there was the story of a little lad who longed to know if there was a God, and, if so, whether He was full of love. He went far out on to the sand and built an altar. Then he knelt and prayed that if there was a God and a God of love He would answer by fire. He waited, and prayed again and yet again. Then he ventured to lift his head and look for the fire, but there was no fire. Nothing had happened; the pitiless sun was burning overhead, but his sacrifice was unconsumed. That little lad felt he was compelled to accept a creed he did not want. 'I do not believe there is a God, or He would answer me.' How is it men go on believing in God when He does not intervene? It is an old inquiry. The War has not originated it, though it has intensified it; it has been repeatedly made over earthquakes, shipwrecks, explosions, and

many other disasters. The only fact which has been made abundantly plain is that the mere prolongation of life or the luxury of existence are not God's chief end for man. God is not a novelist who has to complete His story in one volume.

Any human eye can discover the work God has to do, and can estimate the roads He has to travel. God has created man for Himself, for His companionship and favour. Look abroad, and see how far man has fallen from the ideal which fills the mind of God. The distance of our fall is the measure of our ascent. The fall may have been easy ; the ascent may be difficult, but God determines it shall be made. His purposes cannot be frustrated. They may be delayed. God is so determined that the Divine Likeness shall shine through the human features that He cannot be turned from His object by granting temporary ameliorations or soothing syrups, even to keep men friends with Himself. Go back to the early days of Genesis, and read there the intention God had in your creation, and know that that intention He is going to fulfil. Length of time does not count with Him, though you may be in a hurry to escape your discipline, or to have it abbreviated. Elijah was ; he said he had had enough, but God knew better, and went on giving him more until he was ready for horses and chariots of fire. It may help you to a saner view of life if you

remember that God has the courage of His own convictions. God knows the worth of every man, and with that knowledge pursues him through all the labyrinths of sin. He never loses sight of him for the moment ; never changes His purposes, never wavers from His resolve to go after the 'lost'—waifs and strays—'until He finds it.'

How mightily has Thompson, in his *Hound of Heaven*, expressed this glorious fact :

Halts by me that footfall ;
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly ?
Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest ;
Thou dravest love from thee who dravest Me.

When a man learns that God is on his track, he may know the only choice left to him is dark despair or better, brighter still—the Triumph of Hope.

Why does not God Intervene? It is Apparently a Simple Question.

It is said, ' If God is all powerful, then He can do all things. If He is all good, then He will stop all evil, and shipwrecks, earthquakes, and wars will be no more. As these things are not prevented, then it follows that God is not all powerful, or else He is not all good ; and therefore, in either case, we are absolved from rendering to Him the devotion and

service He seeks. There is an end of the matter.' I shall have achieved something if I have led you to see the problem is not quite so simple as you imagine.

What would it Mean if God Intervened ?

Let it be granted immediately that God could do all things with us if He took free-will out of us. The reason why He does not is because a man minus free-will is not a man ; he is a machine. A man without freedom of will, liberty of action, whose conduct is determined by extraneous forces rather than by his own choice, is a prisoner quite as much as one who is confined within stone cells. The latter is limited by bars, bolts, and keys ; the former by lines of conduct which he must pursue whether he will or not. He has no freedom nor choice, and therefore he ought neither to be rewarded for his virtue nor punished for his vice. It is no part of the divine purpose to intervene so far as this War is concerned, for in that case God would prevent man from having what he has wanted, or, where it has not been actually desired, from reaping the harvest of the false ideals in which he has indulged. The purpose of God is not to prevent war, but to make it abundantly plain that if it is to be, then there must be suffering. To quote Emerson, ' You cannot

have one end without the other end.' If a nation sets its mind upon war, God does not intervene to say, 'Thou shalt not'; all He determines is that out of it shall not come music and mirth, gaiety and gladness. What a devil's world this would be if men could do evil and find that good would come of it! Liberty of conduct is abundantly given, only we should do well to remember that when we choose our conduct we select our results, when we live wholly for self we choose war.

We almost thought our wisdom complete when first we learned that 'every effect must have a cause.' On that day we saw more than 'men as trees walking.' We saw that events do not happen or trees grow just when and where they will; that behind them all there is a cause equal to the result. Having thoroughly mastered that lesson, and passed an examination on it, we might have learned still more if the familiar dictum had been reversed and we had grasped with equal clearness that 'every cause must have an effect.' You cannot set causes to work without having results, any more than you can keep bulldogs in neighbouring back-yards, barking at each other, without knowing there will be a fight some day.

These are days when men, for the sake of their intelligence, are compelled to accept the truth of evolution; but they need to be reminded that they

must have the whole of it ; they cannot lay claim to the part they want and refuse the rest. There is nothing which goes in at one end of the evolution machine which does not come out at the other. God is no more responsible for the effects of our conduct than He is responsible for the causes which we put into operation. God's sole responsibility is that He has created man with a free-will capable of determining the course of his own career. He can only intervene by taking the brains out of your head and filling it with sawdust ; but even then the world would scarcely be as you desire.

Dr. Dallinger, the eminent scientist, was in Sheffield at a time when there was a fearful epidemic of typhoid, and many died. Special prayer-meetings were called ; multitudes assembled to pray that God would stay the scourge ; ministers of all denominations blended their petitions into one that the terrible visitation might come to an end. The most renowned minister of all, Dr. Dallinger, refused to join his petitions with the rest, and many godly people were shocked. He declared that better results would be secured if a strong deputation went to the town-hall authorities demanding the more frequent cleansing of sewers and better sanitary conditions. He contended there should be better housing facilities for bathing, and less squalor and filth allowed to remain in the houses and in the

streets. Dr. Dallinger would not have to fight for his contention to-day ; it would be conceded at once. If a man took a lighted taper into a powder-magazine, he surely would not ask God to intervene to prevent an explosion. Before asking God to intervene it would be as well to refresh our minds as to the state of the world before the War began. As to Germany's actual guilt in wishing this War, in preparing and planning for it for half a century, there need be no controversy ; the verdict of the world has been given. That, however, does not finish the case, nor does it prove our innocence. We may be guiltless of many charges, but all nations of the earth, our own included, must come under this charge, ' There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Be guilty of that, and there is no limit to the sufferings which must follow. Where a nation is selfish, it must breed ' antagonism in other nations ; where there is ambition only for material wealth, there must be an absence of spiritual ideals ; where there is a wild search for pleasure, there must come satiety ; where there is forgetfulness of God, there must inevitably follow disaster.

Some years ago the German Emperor arranged to meet the Czar of Russia whilst cruising in the North Sea. At such ceremonial interviews it is usual for monarchs to wear the uniforms of any regiment of the neighbouring country of which they are honorary

officers. The Czar's valet forgot to take his master's proper uniforms, and the interview had to be delayed several days. The delay gave rise to rumours that friction had arisen between the monarchs of the two countries. The rumour spread to the Stock Exchanges of St. Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and London, with the result that securities depreciated and many firms were ruined. To forget a monarch's uniform may have serious commercial results ; but to forget God is a cause sufficiently great to bring an exalted empire into the dust.

**Are You Quite Sure You Wish God to Intervene ?
If so, When and Where ?**

So far as I know, no one wished God to intervene until our sons were taken ; until the Zeppelins dropped their bombs upon us and the submarines torpedoed our ships and drowned our babies and our women-folk. But this is asking God to intervene too late ; these calamities are the result of what had gone before. You had better know what it is you seek. Do you want God to prevent causes, or do you only want Him to step in between the cause and the result ? I once passed a public-house where in large letters I saw these words, ' GIN AND BITTERS.' That man was advertising a greater truth than he

knew : that gin and bitters go together. There are many who want God to step in between the gin and the bitters ; that is, they want the one, but desire to escape the other. I have known multitudes who wanted drink, but never one who wanted *delirium tremens*. There are many who do not wish to be saved from stealing ; they only want to be delivered from prison.

These are the men who are as afraid of God coming in too soon as they are afraid of Him coming too late. Not very long ago I was present at a conference on venereal diseases presided over by a Lord Mayor. The speakers were distinguished physicians. When they had finished their addresses, which depicted in realistic colours the awfulness of the disease, the meeting was thrown open for questions. To my amazement, every question was directed to one end : Could the disease be cured ? Was it certain that the remedy would be permanent ? If the disease were contracted a second time, would the same remedy avail ? I fear I staggered every one by declaring I was not concerned about the cure of the disease. I had no time to waste over its remedies. My anxiety was to teach men that they had been made in the image of God ; that they were not expected to copy the habits and customs of the beasts. It was to me another illustration of the same fact that when men want God to intervene

they want His intervention to commence when the penalty begins.

I tell you God will not intervene between sin and its result, between lust and disease, between war and suffering, between drink and death.

If, however, you desire God's preventing grace, that you may have without measure. The man who wants to be saved from sin, not simply from its results, will continually find God intervening upon his behalf. Though he walk in the midst of sin he will be kept unspotted, his features will be transfigured, his whole life will be clothed with power, and from him, from his very self, will go forth an influence which will purify the world.

XI

LOOKING AT, BUT SEEING THROUGH

ON one never-to-be-forgotten day I found myself in the Church of S. Pietro in Vincoli, in Rome. Of all the memories that come crowding in upon me I have only opportunity to speak of one.

I was walking between the two long lines of ancient fluted Doric columns which lead to the high altar, my eye being attracted first to this painting and then to that bit of sculpture, and my mind dazed with the wealth of historic designs upon which the imagination might dwell for long. At last there came the moment of quietness and repose when the objects of the vast church seemed to be less crowded together and each claimed to stand out with an individuality all its own. It was at this moment that my eye fastened upon the great feature of the church, the famous Statue of Moses by Michelangelo. I had read of it, heard of it by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye saw it! It cannot be described; it was sublime. There the mighty law-giver sits, with long flowing beard descending to the waist, with horned head, deep-sunk eyes which seemed to blaze as it were with the light of the

burning bush, and with a majesty of anger that wellnigh made one tremble. The first sight of that statue pinned me to the spot. I was almost afraid to leave it lest the figure should come to life and rise up and call me back. There were many others gazing at the figure as I was, but no voice was heard ; the place was as silent as the grave. How long I stood I do not know, but at last I discovered that I was not thinking of the statue so much as of the man it represented. Doubtless the work of Michelangelo's fingers arrested me, held me to the place. I soon felt, however, that it was not the execution of the work but the Subject of the work that was living before me. Michelangelo vanished, and I felt myself in the presence of Moses.

The man who reads the life of Moses does not read a biography, but a whole library of biographies rolled into one. You may know all about the *facts* of his life, and yet know little of the man. One might be correct concerning the facts, and yet wrong concerning the great trend of the wonderful and incomparable career. For the remainder of that day I thought of nothing but—MOSES. If I had to put all I thought into one sentence, that sentence would not be my own ; it would be this, ' He endured as seeing Him who is invisible,' which is the explanation of his life. ' He looked at, but saw through.'

I do not know whether he saw the invisible because he endured, or whether he endured because he saw the invisible. I do know, however, that both qualities are of such significance that their mere order is of small concern.

HE ENDURED. That means he held his ground, withstood all the forces that played upon him in his perilous place. No limpet ever held to its rock, resisting the waves of the ocean, with greater tenacity than he held to the plan, principle, and purpose of his life. He was not to be moved from pillar to post. Endured, as used here, means he was able to withstand all the drawings of the various magnets of influence that acted upon him. Having once selected his standing-ground, no crowd could carry him off his feet.

He saw Him who is INVISIBLE. These words may be correctly rendered, 'As one who gazed upon the invisible God, he never flinched.' He saw through the visible to the invisible; the visible became invisible and the invisible visible. This fact was revealed in three directions which may have some applications for ourselves.

He Saw Through the Pleasures of Sin.

It is not surprising that men should be swept into evil when they look *at* the pleasures of sin; for

brilliancy of colour and strength of perfume virtue cannot compare with them. The wizardry of evil far outstrips, in outward attraction, the plainer delights of integrity. If the fish could see through the bait to the hook, there would be less fish on the bank and more in the river.

No man in this world has ever had such a variety of sin at which to gaze as Moses. What extravagances in evil and what ingenuities in vice would face him amid the splendours of the Egyptian court! What chance would he have had if he had only been able to look *at* these things? What a pantomime, what a theatrical display, sin can spread before the eyes of men! For scintillating glitter there is nothing to equal it. Sin reflected in a mirror is an amazing revelation. To see *through* it is to gain deliverance by the way of nausea and disgust.

I live in a road where several theatres are constantly loading and unloading their extraordinary stage scenery. If only the patrons of the stage could see these wonderful gardens, leafy bowers, gorgeous rooms, and marble pavements, as I see them when they are being tumbled on and off the carts, they would soon learn that whatever kind of light the work of the stage artist can endure, it cannot endure daylight. It reveals its blemishes, shows up its dirt, and makes manifest its tears, so that no pedestrian desires a second look.

I have stood aghast that men could be found who would derive their pleasure in gazing upon such unseemly daubs. Electric-light, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. The Church for prismatic colour or for excitement cannot compete. It is not in the running with the race-course and the gambling-den. To the eyes of the *habitué* of these places how dull the youth must appear, how lacking in spirit, who tramps his way after his work is finished to the night school ! How strange the man who finds recreation in talking in a dimly lighted vestry with a few kindred souls upon the great truths on which life and destiny turn ! What black dragoons these must appear in the world's procession of scarlets, purples, crimsons, and the like !

But let it not be forgotten that things are not what they seem either upon the right hand or the left. The night school leads to the path of industry, achievement, and honour. The contemplation of the things of the soul is not quite so profitless as some may have imagined. The man who thinks it worth his while to dwell upon purity, holiness, and truth comes at last to discover that he has been transformed into the same image. Those who have preferred the mock heroics of the stage, the company of the fairies of the footlights, the profits of the gambler, find in the end they have been trapped and deceived. The things they did not expect are the things they

have—disappointment, chagrin, and death. The next time you come into contact with sin look not *at* it, but *through* it. The spell will be broken, and you will be safe.

He Saw Through the Treasures of Egypt.

What a treasure-house Egypt was ! The wealth of the world had been poured into it ; gold and silver without weight, jewels of every colour, and garments of exquisite material and make, all found their home in Egypt. It was the country where the men of the royal house at least would have no difficulty in drinking of splendour continually. It was the place, of all places, to encourage selfishness and arouse the passions of envy and covetousness ; eyes would look out upon them filled with insatiable greed. There was one exception, however, and that exception was Moses, who saw THROUGH them, and discovered that they were only shadows ; consequently he could go about his work without one avaricious thought festering his heart. They *were* treasures of EGYPT ; but such treasures to Moses were only dross. In the scales which he used the treasures of Egypt were lighter than vanity.

I have often gazed upon that great picture by Watts, ‘*Sic transit gloria mundi*’—‘Thus passes the glory of the world.’ It is the picture of a draped

corpse upon a bier, around which are grouped the emblems of art, music, science, literature, royalty, and fashion. They are the things that have passed. Then as you look a moment longer there emerges out of the darkness the shadowy letters upon the wall, 'What I spent I had ; what I saved I lost ; what I gave I have.' It will be a terrible thing if we do not see through the treasures of earth until we ourselves have passed away ! Quite recently I was in conversation with a man who has reached a very high honour in the country. As I looked at him 'from afar' I said what a great position it was to hold. His reply amazed me. He said, 'Yes, but I have paid too dearly for it. For years I have dreamt of it, laboured for it, even angled for it, and now it is mine there is little joy in it ; certainly nothing to be compared with the moments that I had of genuine well-being of soul in my early days.' It was one of the treasures of England through which he had not seen until he received it. Do not forget that the treasures of England, like the treasures of Egypt, never satisfy when in possession. There is no possession, no treasure of earth, either of honour or wealth, that can give one hour of genuine happiness. It is an awful moment of disillusionment when a man sees 'through.' The treasures of heaven, the treasures of God, are found in strange places, amid sickness and poverty ; but wherever they are, they are

accompanied with a full-orbed satisfaction that nothing in this world can destroy.

He Saw Through the Wrath of the King.

What prospect of happiness can there be for the man who has roused the anger of his sovereign? The doors of promotion, of emolument, of society, are closed to him. Social ostracism is hard to bear. The day when Moses roused the anger of Pharaoh would have been an awful day for him if he had not seen *through* the wrath; then it became a bad day for Pharaoh. The moment Moses saw through his wrath his power had gone; for him the fear of Pharaoh was gone for ever. It reminds us of that day when Mary Queen of Scots burst into tears of infinite rage because John Knox could look upon her without being afraid. To the great Reformer all her wrath and anger resembled the cracking of fireworks; he saw through her tricks, and was not dismayed. The wrath of kings is nothing to the man who is on the side of God. I remember an old boatman who was endeavouring to beguile an elderly lady into his ferry-boat. When she ventured to put her foot on the side of the boat it began to rock. 'Oh dear!' she said. 'Is there any fear?' 'Yes, madam,' he answered, 'plenty of fear, but no danger.' Many fear the wrath of the king of pleasure, of

fashion, of wealth ; but there is no danger where there is an alliance with God. The powers of the world may fill the earth with rage and bitterness, and all nature may be scorched and withered wherever they tread. Yet there is nothing to dread when God is 'within the shadows keeping watch above His own.'

Years ago the English Academy and the French Salon contained two remarkable pictures. In one the king is lying on his bed the moment after death—the mightiest monarch of his day—and the sceptre has just dropped from his hands. And behold, the servants, who an hour ago trembled at his look, are rifling his treasury and dividing his possessions. Below with fine irony was written the title, 'William the Conqueror.' His conquests had ceased. In the other picture a man is lying in a rocky tomb. His conflict is over ; His enemies have won. He denied the world, and the world crucified Him ; but love has wrapped His body in spices, and given Him a new tomb amid the flowers of the garden. The angels of God and not the Roman soldiers are keeping watch over Him. William the Conqueror is conquered. Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord of Glory, defied the world, despised its treasure, saw through the pageantry and power of a tinsel monarch, and to-day His triumphs are the glory and the amazement of the world. O man, have you grasped the lesson

of this day? Do not fasten your envious eyes upon temporal things, which perish in the using ; live in no fear of principalities or powers, which cannot damage your inheritance if you live near to God and do His will. Learn to hold the world with a light hand, and you will discover in turn that you will be held by the great, strong hand of God.

XII

THE FOLLY OF OVER-CONFIDENCE

THE folly of over-confidence ! The subject speaks for itself. It is not, however, sufficient, for when the mischief has once taken hold there is scarcely anything that will eradicate it. In one of Crockett's books we read, ' Ye see, Johnny MacWalter cudna but lose, for his mither, and his teacher, and the hale country-side, and he hissel', as muckle as ony, were a' owre-confident.' To which his friend replied, ' That's it, Kit ! Be ye laddie, be ye man, ye never win if you're owre-confident.' How many anticipated successes have turned out to be failures because of an unworthy amount of over-confidence ! It must needs be, if you go into the fight bragging, you will come out of it beaten.

History is as faithful a witness as fiction, with the additional emphasis of truth. Edward II set out to invade Scotland, and was so over-confident of triumph that he took with him all the accompaniments of victory. It was well he delayed unfurling his bunting even as long as he did, or his humiliation would have been greater still. In his retinue he

had with him one Baston, a minstrel, to celebrate his triumph. It is often said that the Scots have no sense of humour. Perhaps not ; only when it does appear it is grim enough even for an Englishman to understand. The Scots took prisoner the English poet, and denied him his liberty until he had put into undying words the immortal deeds of the Scots ! There is at least a sense of humour in the fact that the poet was compelled to celebrate a different triumph from the one he expected. Let us hope it was a fatal blow to the over-confidence of the monarch—the precursor of his defeat.

Napoleon I. suffered badly from the same complaint. When he proposed invading England in 1804 he commanded the master of the French mint to strike a medal to celebrate the assured victory, which never came ! This world-wide conflict is not over, but it has at least gone far enough to teach the Kaiser the lesson of the folly of being over-confident. Not yet has he reached Paris ; still less has he invited his guests to feast with him at the table of Buckingham Palace.

I have had a personal experience of the folly of over-confidence. The town was upon the eve of a political election, in which feeling had been running very high, and the excitement was intense. On the polling-day, with feverish haste a number of workmen were arranging a platform and erecting an iron

framework in fanciful designs, which were to be decorated with lights the moment the victory was announced. In the centre was a large monogram of the over-confident candidate—‘A.B.F.’—ready for the victory moment. It came at last. The waiting crowd had become thousands strong; the torch was waiting for the light; everything was in readiness. The moment came; the poll was declared. Alas, how truly terrible! how unbelievable! The candidate for whom there was no fancy framework awaiting illumination had won! Then a voice screamed out, ‘What will “A.B.F.” stand for now?’ Quicker than lightning from another throat came the answer which is so obvious it need not be repeated. The defeated candidate had prepared for himself a humiliation which, if he had been less confident, he might have been spared. The folly of which I speak is not confined to kings and politicians; it is found in unexpected places. I have heard the story of a man full of confidence mounting a platform to deliver a speech which was to be an assured success. It began well; every pause and every intonation was perfect—calculated, indeed, to startle the audience with the brilliancy of epigram and I know not what besides. Alas, however, there came a complete breakdown, a silence which could be felt, and the would-be orator rushed from his exalted place into some corner of hiding, only to meet with one who

said, ' My friend, if you had gone on to that platform with the feeling with which you have come from it, you would have come from it with the feeling with which you went on to it.' The man had been defeated by his over-confidence.

Do not ridicule these stories of the humiliations which come to men, lest from the same folly you may have to endure a like result.

A Man is Guilty of Over-confidence when he Reckons he can Command the Future.

The ' rich fool ' of the Gospels erred precisely at this point. He said to himself (how interesting to know what a man says to himself !), ' Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.' He confuses the certainty of his goods with the uncertainty of himself, and comes to the conclusion altogether false. A simple process of arithmetic enables him to estimate his goods, to measure how long they will last at a given annual consumption ; but no arithmetic or any other power known to man could calculate how long he himself would last ! He had not stayed to think that the goods might survive himself.

The earth is strewn with frustrated schemes, unfulfilled hopes, unrealized ambitions, all because planned for days which never dawned. To-day is yours, not to-morrow. To resolve that in five

years' time you will be a better man, perform deeds of charity you are neglecting now, discharge obligations which should receive immediate attention, is simply to bring upon yourself enormous condemnation. You know perfectly that the future forms no part of your possessions. Goods you may have stored up, but not so much as one hour of another day belongs to you.

Should it be that, in the mercy of God, life is granted even to four-score years, that brings no guarantee that you will fulfil your promises or accomplish your purposes. You have failed to take into account the fixity of habit. Drummond declared it was wellnigh impossible for a man to change the shape of his collar after he was forty years of age. Do you imagine that if all your great and high resolves are to be left in abeyance for five or ten years that then you will be more willing to live unselfishly and to perform righteous acts when in the meantime you have been loving only yourself and indulging in your own vanities? Make a crease in a piece of paper and then tear it, and you will discover it tears along the line of the crease you have made. Think of the crease you have put in your own life by the habits you have formed. You have trodden your path so often and so long that it has deepened into a rut, and the only difference between a rut and a grave is its depth. What probability

is there that you will escape and walk in a new path, towards a new goal and in search of diviner aims? This building up for yourself a record of high character and of true godliness which is to commence at some distant time is neither more nor less than the folly of over-confidence, which the facts of history do not justify.

**A Man is Guilty of Over-confidence when he Relies
Exclusively upon his Own Cleverness.**

Cleverness is the explanation of many failures. This is frequently proved. Sir James Paget has said that 'cleverness accounts for as many failures at the University as anything else.' What a solatium this is to failures! 'Wooden spoons' in your hands may be accounted for by brains in your head. We should scarcely have thought it, but as Sir James Paget has made the statement there must be something in it. The fact does occur sometimes that men are so clever that they strike from work and take to living by their wits—a precarious livelihood indeed! Charles Lamb tells us of a man who declared he could have written as well as Shakespeare 'if he had a mind to.' Precisely. If he only had!

Others there are who listen to stories of the way in which certain men have been overtaken in evil. They have been caught in nefarious practices, and

they account for the captures by the lack of ability rather than by the presence of the vice. I have often been impressed by the 'knowing look' certain individuals throw into their eyes when they listen to such stories, as much as to say, 'It is really very foolish to be caught, but when you know a thing or two escape is not difficult. Men have been arrested for entering explosive areas with cigarettes and matches hidden upon their persons; but, then, they were caught napping. They were childish in their methods; if they had only known it, there was a better way.'

Some, indeed, are so clever, so thoroughly master of themselves, that they love to tell how closely they have been able to sail to the wind without being swept off their feet and driven where they would rather not go. They would disdain to avail themselves of the protection against evil which has been provided for them; they would scorn to pray, scorn to enter upon self-discipline, scorn to escape the lowest by a positive devotion to the highest. Their deliverance is their cleverness. Let the fish, if it likes, find safety in its protective colourings, the rose prolong its life by guarding its beauty with thorns; but they intend to go wherever they will and do as they will; they are quite able to deliver themselves. This very day I have had a man tell me the story of a wonderfully clever criminal; it was enormously

interesting—indeed, quite exciting. I could not, however, help replying, when I had heard all, that, notwithstanding his cleverness, he did not escape being caught! The only way to escape capture is to escape criminality, and for that brains are not sufficient. The only escape is in the humility which is glad to hide itself in the protective covering of the Saviour.

**A Man is Guilty of Over-confidence when he
Imagines he can Play with Sin and not be Damaged.**

Few things are of more importance than playing in this overstrung, nerve-wracked age. Men need relaxation as much as boys. The father who secures it by playing games round his own table with his children renders to them and to himself an immense service. Only be it remembered, when we speak of games, sin is not included; the man who plays with sin plays the fool. The papers told us recently of a banker's son at Norwich who had kept a young lion as a pet. One morning he went to release it from its cage to have a romp with it over his father's fields, and it turned upon him and rent him to pieces. I have known a few who have played with their own destructors in the same fashion. After all, one's games should be wisely chosen. I would suggest that you play at skittles; they are made for life's lighter moments and not for serious philosophic

thought. I can thoroughly recommend you to play golf. Only see that you really do *play* it ; some have taken it so seriously that they have lost their tempers, and then play has ceased. A game of golf is worth much, but it is not worth losing your temper or putting a strain upon friendship which it should not be asked to bear. It is a capital thing to play a game of patience, especially when you are beginning to feel irritable because everything is not at hand the moment you desire it. If under these circumstances you *play* patience, some day you will be able to practise it. When that comes your wife will look five years younger than she does to-day.

The man who would reduce the world's play is an enemy to the race, but he who plays with sin is the worst enemy of himself. Sin is the one thing with which there can be no play, for it is no game ; and if men enter upon it as such, it is only to discover that all players are losers. Samson entered upon sin as a game, and soon discovered it was a destructive tragedy from which he could not escape. He was so clever, so over-confident, he regarded playing with the temptress as nothing short of a bit of real rollicking sport. Listen to him as he says, ' I will go out and shake myself as at other times.' He meant he would ' pull himself together ' ; but he had done it so often that at last there was nothing to pull together. The moral fibre had gone out of him.

Play by all means, play often and play much, but at games and not with sin. Its blinding effect is awful.

A man is guilty of trickery and fraud, but because the accountant has not discovered it and the policeman has not handcuffed him he chuckles to himself, and says, 'Good for me! I have done it and not been caught.' He quite forgets that though he has escaped the felon's cell he has not escaped the felon's soul, and that is the greater calamity of the two. A man, having read of all the evil results of impurity, feels the game is too risky; so instead of playing it he will *think* it, and live in a world of 'make believe,' under the delusion that in that at least he will be safe. Do you call that escaping? What about the pictures which will be hung around the walls of your mind? You will become saturated with foul imaginings, and your brain will be a chamber of horrors to yourself. I do not dispute your cleverness, but if it were a thousand times greater than it is your over-confidence in playing with sin will prove your own undoing. How great your distress if at this moment you felt a numbness creeping down your side! You try to lift your hand to your face, and you cannot. You learn for the first time that your hand cannot obey the command of your will. You grow cold at the thought of the agony it portends. Be wise in time, for a greater calamity may

be coming. It may be that you have so long played with sin and rejoiced at your wonderful escapes, and yet you know not that the greatest retribution of all is upon you. You have played with sin until you have ceased to be shocked at it. You can think the unholy and the unclean without a shudder. There is no sin without penalty, no way in which you can do wrong without suffering the consequences. This is the sphere where your own cleverness has turned you into a fool.

If it is sin itself that you would escape, then there is the mightiest provision in the world. The fullness of divine grace is at your disposal. Think of it ! The grace, the strength, of God may be yours without money and without price.

At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold ;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking :
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking.

XIII

CHEAP NOTORIETY

IF you ask me who Maud Braden is, I must tell you frankly I do not know. The name is entirely fictitious, merely because it is no part of my business to advertise those whom I would rather ignore and forget. The person behind the name is no invention. I stepped out of the train at one of the great London railway termini, and was hurrying through the crowded thoroughfares of the City, when my attention was suddenly arrested by the bold type of the newspaper placards in no uncertain way :

THE MARRIAGE OF
MAUD BRADEN.

A Shameless Press.

The type could not have been bolder had it announced the 'Death of the Kaiser.' It was such type as is only used for world-shaking events. My eyes had no sooner beheld the startling announcement than my ears were pierced with the shrill voice of a lad proclaiming the same startling intelligence

to those who by any chance were too blind to read. He saw to it that his strident shouting should be a worthy partner with the bigness of his type. I hurried on my way fully expecting that the next newspaper placard would convey to me some other item of information ; but there was no other news. There was no room for any ; it was all occupied with the ' Marriage of Maud Braden.' The only variety discoverable was in the wording of the same news. Some placards said, ' Marriage of Maud Braden ' ; others preferred ' Maud Braden Married.' I reached Piccadilly, but the placards did not vary. However far west I travelled, the same thrilling news had arrived before me. Men were running from their offices all anxious for papers giving particulars of the event which was holding the minds of the million. Men eager for home missed their 'buses rather than go without particulars of the stupendous event the papers chronicled : ' Maud Braden Married.' I dived into the Underground Railway, but there also men behind their book-stalls were breathlessly busy whilst impatient customers clamoured for their favourite papers, though all retailed the same story, ' Maud Braden Married.' I entered the train, and both sides of the long compartment were filled with men of the most various types, all alike devouring the news of Maud Braden's marriage. My brain reeled, my heart throbbed with excitement. I said

to myself, ' Here is London with its seven millions of people, a city where judges and juries are deciding cases of life and death, the city where legislators are making fresh laws or amending old ones, but the newspapers have little room for verdicts on the one hand or enactments on the other.' The writers of newspapers knew that the inhabitants of London ' cared for none of these things ' ; all they desired to know was that Maud Braden was married.

Never have I been more ashamed of my ignorance. My face blushed scarlet lest any should discuss with me the prospects of the bride before I knew who she was. At first I divined she must be some mighty personage under an assumed name. Then I thought perhaps she is one whom no one expected to marry. This would account for the sensation, in that thousands of more likely spinsters had been waiting their turn in the matrimonial market and Maud Braden, the unlikeliest of all, had been snapped up before them ! Or perhaps she was a prominent militant suffragette ! I confessed to myself it would be a marvel if any man would be courageous enough to promise to walk through life with such a one ' till death do us part.' I discovered, however, that all my surmises were wrong, for the man who sat next to me in the railway-carriage said, ' It is to be hoped she will not leave the stage.' I said, ' Who ? ' He replied, ' Maud Braden ; she is married.' At last I

was enlightened. Maud Braden, whose marriage had eclipsed all other events and electrified London, had not the soul of a militant suffragette—who, whatever her faults, at least cared so much for some object that she would even face death rather than miss it—but was merely a ballet-girl, a dancer before the footlights for the amusement of lives as empty and purposeless as her own !

Shameless Readers.

My indignation rose against the newspapers that would fill their columns and placards with such worthless stuff. Then an incident of long ago came to my mind, and changed my judgement. The nature of my work had taken me to a court of law. The magistrate had given his verdict, and the guilty man had stepped down to pay his fine in preference to imprisonment. He then walked to the reporter's table and said, ' Please do not report this case. I do not want my name to appear in the papers.' The reply he received was very emphatic : ' Get away, man ! We make our living out of cases such as yours ; *we have to supply what the people like to read.*'

It is useless to blame the reporters. They have to write *down* to the public taste. The newspapers in giving such amazing prominence to the marriage of a ballet-girl did but reflect the popular taste of the

community. It has always been so. In the time of the Renaissance Aretino excuses himself by the remark, "Why write serious books? Amusement and scandal are the only things that pay." Editors and newspaper writers would soon begin to supply what is worthy and uplifting if this would sell their papers; but they know it would not. It has been authoritatively stated that the Sunday papers utilize more of their columns for retailing the filth of the divorce courts than anything else. What does it mean? It means that multitudes are suffering from a depraved taste, and so long as they demand literary garbage, so long will it be supplied. If you loathe the placarding of the trivial and the suppressing of the great, why do you not utter your protest? It is no use 'suffering in silence' or protesting anonymously. There is no virtue in this so long as great moral issues are at stake. For seven years I sojourned in lodgings, and suffered many things. I can remember one morning my porridge was cold, but I silently suffered, and solemnly resolved that cold porridge should not disturb the harmony of the day. The next morning the bacon was cold as well, but I remembered the story of Epictetus, who allowed his cruel persecutors to twist his leg from its socket without protest, and I resolved to copy the calm of the philosopher. The following morning the tea was also cold. This

threefold coldness made me hot, and from that day the breakfasts improved. Complaint and protest are the essential forerunners of reforms. Even the owner of a graveyard has refused to put the ground in order until the tenants began to complain! Has not the time come for you to complain? Should you not demand better food for brain and heart than the husks that the swine do eat?

The disease of the multitude to-day is also the disease of a perverted vision. Men are magnifying the small and are minimizing the great. It is lack of proportion that is setting the world wrong. If a newspaper takes two columns to tell the story of a prize-fight or to record the loathsome details of a murder, while the publication of an epoch-making book or the initiation of a great religious movement is either relegated to a corner or omitted altogether, it must not be the paper for you! When the marriage of Maud Braden occupies the space, the journal had better occupy the waste-paper basket.

History reveals the fact that this has ever been true. Society has shown a greater desire to be amused than enlightened. Lecky says of the early days of Christianity that in Rome there was an absolute silence concerning the appearance and growth of this new religion, and it can only be accounted for by the spiritual blindness of the literary classes. The greatest religious change in the

history of mankind took place under a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and historians who were profoundly conscious of the degeneration around them, yet they utterly failed to recognize the most powerful moral lever that has ever been applied to the affairs of men. In ancient Rome, as in modern Britain, it was the frivolous and useless that took precedence over the sublime truths that are to elevate mankind. When grand old Homer in his blindness was at work writing as no man has ever written before or since, contemporary opinion of him is revealed in the fact that he had either to beg his bread or starve. When John Bunyan dreamed as no man ever dreamed or will dream, the drinking, dissolute community in which he lived sent him to prison.

There is no escaping the fact that something is wrong with the world that pays ballet-girls and actresses salaries ten times greater than its Members of Parliament, that gives to its jockeys £10,000 a year, and remunerates cooks with bigger salaries than statesmen and schoolmasters. This spirit has so saturated the world that even men who are treading the paths of greatness do not always know where their greatness lies. Sir Walter Scott, the author of *Waverley* and *Kenilworth*, was visited by admiring crowds because of his literary greatness ; but he left them in no doubt that he thought more

of himself as the squire of Abbotsford than the author of his live-long tales. Yet, if he had been squire only, men would not have turned from their beaten track to see him. There is, at any rate, that sanity in the public mind which enables it to know there is nothing inherently great in a squire.

Scientists tell us that the size of fish is partly determined by the size of the water in which they swim, and they reach their greatest size when they are found in the widest oceans. So it is with man. He has within him infinite capacities, but they only reach their fulfilment when they are fed and nourished upon things that are great and holy and of good report. Lord Salisbury said, 'Study large maps.' Let me say to you, 'Study great ideals; learn to dwell amid the greatest altitudes.'

It is the crowning calamity of life that tens of thousands have been turned from their divine quest by such frivolities as the 'Marriage of Maud Braden.' Live for the higher theme, work and toil for the accomplishment of great spiritual purposes, and at last, though you have missed life's frivolities, you will have reached a manhood crowned with the glory of God.

XIV

THE BEST HOURS OF A MAN'S LIFE

THE detective stories of Sherlock Holmes are to some people the very wine of life. All because they love to be on the track of other men! To-day I am anxious to put you upon your own track. I know perfectly you have lived with yourself all your life, but the strange fact remains you are more intimate with the ways and habits of your workmate than you are with your own. Suppose, by way of a change, you take a good long look at yourself, stare into your own eyes, ask questions from yourself about yourself, come to know the things for which you stand, try to discover when you are at your best, and when you really touch life's high-water mark ; in other words, which are the best hours of life.

One of a Man's Best Hours is when he Enters Upon the Joy of Life.

Life may be an experience or an adventure, but it has not reached its summit until it throbs with joy. Existence does not fill out the meaning of life, nor does it fulfil life's capacity ; all it does is to save you

from an untoward interment. A man does not reach the fullness of his stature until his head has wellnigh struck the stars. How few men seem to have entered into the joy—if you will not misunderstand me, I will say into the fun of living! The gateways of life are so many through which we may pass into the universe at large and through which the universe may pass into us. To be alive is absolutely ‘top-hole.’

Fasten your thought upon the mere joy of living. It is a mistake to confound the joy of living with money, or silver spoons, or motor-cars; many a man is vastly happier who has only a perambulator! Life is the supreme possession; it is the vestibule into all good things. A while ago I approached a dear old venerable of my Brotherhood, who had long passed his three-score years and ten, and I was inclined to be sympathetic with him because of his years; but he disdained my commiseration, clapped and rubbed his hands, and with laughter in his eyes declared, ‘I am glad to be as old as I am!’ I looked upon him in amazement, and said, ‘Tell me why you are so glad to be old.’ ‘Because,’ said he, ‘if I were not as old as I am I should be dead!’ Then we laughed and rejoiced together. Some men are so much alive they emit life from their eyes and from their finger-tips as sparks from an anvil. Oh, the joy of physical health! Oh, the delight of a sound

body ! Do not forget, if this priceless treasure is yours, to thank God for it.

Remember it is not the ascetic man but the athletic one who pleases God most ; the man who develops his health, not who stultifies it. How is it that, if we see some anaemic, cadaverous-looking individual, we are inclined to associate him with some church or other ? If, however, we see a stout, well-nourished man with happy, shining face approaching, he is rather regarded as an illustration of worldliness and unbelief. We too often forget that it is our business to be at our physical best, and that it is only by so doing that we can really rejoice in the other realms of life. There is the joy of mental life—enabling us to grapple with the problems of existence and in some measure to answer the questions which crowd upon us—and the joy of our moral and spiritual life, which brings us into fellowship with God. It seems to me that life is an inexhaustible joy. I remember hearing the story of a man who was found leaning against a cemetery-wall wellnigh exhausted with a fearful paroxysm of coughing. A passer-by stayed to sympathize with him, and remarked, ' Friend, you have a terrible cough.' ' I have,' was the man's response, ' but there are many on the other side of the wall who would be glad of it ! ' That man was absolutely right, as was the old woman who replied, when her minister endeavoured to

fascinate her with his eloquent description of heaven, 'I do not doubt it, sir, but Old England for me !' To people with this kind of theology all things are possible. To realize the joy of life is to enter upon one of life's best hours.

**Another of a Man's Best Hours is when he can
Enjoy the Luxury of Solitude.**

Perhaps you desire to dispute this, and to silence me by quoting the lines of Alexander Selkirk :

O Solitude, where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
Than reign in this horrible place.

I have no quarrel with Selkirk ; I admit he had too much of a good thing. I do not say that men should *live* in solitude, but to enjoy an hour of it is one of life's greatest luxuries.

No man is more to be pitied than the one who when alone has no resources within himself for his own entertainment, and must needs rush off to the theatre and music-hall and pay to be amused ! If I were speaking of the joys of friendships, I should have much to say ; but I am not. My theme at the moment is to deal with the man who dare not be alone.

A man who is bored with an uncongenial companion has his means of escape ; but in what a sorry

case is the man who is bored with his own company ! The moment he is alone his heart begins to speak *to him*. It is that he cannot stand. My prison chaplaincy taught me that there are multitudes of men who would rather face an army than themselves. Prisoners say they can go through the prison day ; the work is no hardship. The real trouble begins at night when locked in their cells ALONE. It is then their reason is endangered ; their brains burn like fire ; they wish for the walls of their cells to close in upon them. Solitude is hell.

Goethe found it to be so ; but, then, think how he had lived. One woman he had flung down a flight of steps, injured another for life, and lived in unholy love with two others. So full of corruption was he that he became a terror to himself, and paled as he saw his face in the mirror. He had courage to meet any one save himself. Life's supreme agony is when a man dare not be left alone.

A true man

Finds comfort in himself and in his cause,
And while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of heaven's applause.

Boswell once said to Dr. Johnson, ' Oh, doctor, the joys of society and being in company, are they not delightful ? ' To which the doctor replied, ' What, delight in society and in company ? Do you

know, there is not one man in this whole place who dares to go into solitude for an hour to talk with his own heart ! ’

When a man lives nobly and purely, having directed his soul to dwell only upon those things which are ‘ lovely and of good report,’ he knows the luxury of solitude. He enters into it that he may feast his eyes upon his treasures. In solitude Nature speaks to the imagination as she never can in company. Plato lived in solitude, and only descended into the crowd to be its benefactor. The times when a man can disentangle himself from the ways of the world and be ‘ at home ’ only to God become one of the rare hours of life. God unfolds His purposes to him, makes him the partner of His secrets, and sends him forth with a keener appreciation of what life may be when lived in God.

Travellers from Kentucky tell us of its wonderful cave which has the power of stimulating the senses. When the visitor has been in its strange and silent labyrinths for an hour or two, and comes back into the open air, he can discern the very scents of the flowers and trees and grasses. So it is with the man who is independent of the glaring stage-lights, blandishments, and theatricals of this tawdry world. He refuses to have his life absorbed with the vulgar, palpitating excitements of buying and selling. He cuts himself adrift from the surfeiting and stupe-

fyng imbecilities of unregenerate society, and retires within the chambers of his own soul to ask, ' Lord, what wilt Thou have me do ? ' He returns to his place in life with a new perception of his powers and a knowledge of the glory which awaits him. He comes to know that when he will he may have converse with God ; and those sublime moments of solitude spent with Him send him forth with a slacker hold upon the things of time, but with a firmer grip upon eternity. The hour of his solitude becomes the hour of his benediction.

A Man's Best Hour is when he Acquiesces in the Purpose of God in his Own Life.

It is the best hour because he now becomes, not hopeful of, but confident of, success. Up to now he has been using a word wrongly, and thereby creating an error in the soul. The ruling idea of success is inseparable from wealth and power, publicity and fame. To this moment it never dawned upon him that he might be a success in private life ; now he sees there is no true success anywhere else. To be a public success and a private failure is the product of the tailor and the upholsterer, the outcome of the Stock Exchange divorced from conscience.

It is a great hour in a man's life when he learns that success according to the pattern of the world is

a peculiarly dangerous thing. Orchids are the flowers of the rich ; the rarest blooms are beyond the reach of the poor. We are told, however, that they have brought, if not into existence, at least into evidence, a peculiarly poisonous insect, whose bite is followed by cruel results. Success after the world's pattern is not unlike the rich man's orchid.

Macaulay records in one of his essays that history is full of the greatest names spoilt by success. Of one he says, ' His head was strong for all purposes of debate, but was weak against the intoxicating influence of success.' What a pity that so many who climb to lofty places should become light-headed ! Yet so it is, and many have lived to curse the day of their achievement.

There is, however, a success of another kind ; and yet not another, for, after all, the name must not be given to counterfeits. True success is only reached when a man answers to the purpose of God as the seal answers to the die ; and the greatest hour of life is when a man with full purpose of heart sets off to secure this result. It may be reached when the world thinks it missed.

This was the case with James Smetham, who painted pictures, wrote poetry, studied literature, and, above all, lived simply, finding his ideal in simplicity of thought and purity of life. Wealth he had none ; polite society was not aware of his

existence. Some who knew him wrote sympathizing with him for his lack of success, and saying that at least he deserved to 'get on' in his vocation. To all this he replied, 'In my own secret heart I look upon myself as one who has got on, and got to his goal; as one who has secured something a thousand times better than a fortune.'

The best hour of a man's life is when he declares he must have the favour of God, and with absolute determination of heart and will sets off to secure it. One picture in the Tate Gallery has always fascinated me. It is called 'Beyond Man's Footsteps.' It is the picture of a lonely Alpine peak that no travellers' feet have ever trod. As I gazed upon it my thoughts have dwelt upon the great highlands of character, steep and difficult to reach, but not impossible, aided by the inspiring thought of accomplishment and supported by the infinite grace of God. No greater day will dawn for you than the one when you set forth to reach this goal, except the day when to you is spoken the word of all words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of thy Lord.'

XV

CAN GOD SAVE ENGLAND? IF SO, HOW?

NEVER has it been more difficult for Britishers to be proud of their country than during the last decade. Some may contradict that statement, and bring up testimonies which speak of charities, of wide benevolences, and deeper sympathies than ever before. To all this there can be no denial. Nevertheless the offending statement must remain, and the evidence be produced.

Ireland, immediately prior to this world-wide conflict, was on the verge of civil war : her government has ever been the most difficult problem of our Empire. The gravity of the situation had enormously increased. Statesmen of all parties had come to recognize their impotence, and had almost sunk into despair. Nor was the difficulty confined to Ireland. In England the women were entirely out of hand. We do not speak of the justice or injustice of their cause, but only assert that two facts became abundantly clear. The first was the powerlessness of the politicians, and the second was that the women would go to all lengths to secure their end.

Loathsome diseases, the aftermath of impurity, were on the increase. Alcohol had more and more entrenched its position, and nothing could repel it. The agonized cries of multitudes that ascended to Heaven from wrecked homes and blighted lives moved to pity every heart except the heart that finds its wealth in the trade that wellnigh ruins the world. The brewers did not hear the pleadings of the doomed and the damned ; they only heard the chink of the money which kept continually falling into their coffers. In religion, there were facts which made ' the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.' The Kikuyu controversy threatened to rend in twain the Anglican Church. There were those who claimed, by ordination, to be the descendants of the apostles ; and who showed their apostolic spirit by refusing to recognize the validity of the ministry of all whose conscience directed them to enter the sacred vocation by another door. The salvation of the world, through the sacrifice of the Saviour, was the object of both, yet, alas, they were sorely divided from each other. This lack of charity rent the seamless robe of the Bride of Christ.

Such were some of the outstanding features of our country when in a moment, like a bolt from the blue, this disastrous War descended upon us. Not one of the problems has been solved ; they have only been shelved for the time—silenced by the roar of the

war cannons, which are mowing down our sons and turning the green fields of the world into a field of blood.

That England Needs Saving, We are Agreed.

No one can say that this is an overdrawn picture of England, our 'green and pleasant land.' There is no need to apologize for the subject of this address, seeing that at the present time it is the **ONLY** subject that is worth considering.

At this moment the whole of our national strength is being exerted to deliver us from the tyranny of Germany; all parties, divisions, and factions are forgotten in the righteous resolve to keep the invader from our shores. It must be remembered, however, that when we have conquered Germany we shall not even then be living in a Garden of Eden, nor will our people have become saints. Not yet can we claim the white flower of a blameless life. It is often said that if Germany wins in this conflict life for us will not be worth living. The marvel is that so many find it worth living with things as they are; it is only a blunted moral sense, a chloroformed conscience, which makes existence bearable. If we realized the world's sin as the Master did, we too, like Him, should shed many and bitter tears; nay, they would be convulsive sobs such as were His over sin-stained Jerusalem. Not yet has the War driven us along

the upward path to better things. Men with the breath of God in their nostrils are still content to labour merely for the meat which perisheth.

It is an indisputable fact that the longer a man lives, and the shorter the time he has in which to enjoy his wealth, the greedier he becomes. Alcohol is still the reigning monarch of England ; and of all the powerful influences at work in the country, not one of them nor all combined have proved themselves strong enough to dethrone him. The War costs seven and a quarter millions of money a day, but that does not prevent King Alcohol, in the fourth year of strife, from taking millions of money more out of the pockets of the people than he did in the time of peace. Nor is this all. Venereal diseases are greatly on the increase, and are taking terrible toll from our men. A still worse fact is that these same diseases, in some way or other, and with the addition of culpable carelessness, are robbing our nation of the babes as they are born into the world. In the year 1916 nine men died every hour on the battlefields of France. Think of it ! From January to December every hour as it passed bore with it *nine* precious lives ! You are aghast at the figure, and well you may be, but it is nothing to the next figure that I want you to have. In *England* during the same period, *twelve* babies died every hour in the first twelve months of life. If you do not know the reason

why, ask your doctors, go to the infirmaries, read the book entitled *Stand Up, Ye Dead*, and you will learn that in this twentieth century and in modern England vices are rampant of which ancient Athens would have been ashamed.

The river Wharfe is a pleasing river running towards Bolton Woods in Yorkshire. At one place, known as the 'Strid,' the channel narrows amid big boulders, and there the waters are foaming, swift, and deep. From one side of the seething current to the other is not far, and, save for nervousness, there is no reason why the average man should not leap across. But should he fail he must, in default of immediate help, lose his life in the turbulent flood. Tradition has it that long years ago a noble youth came down the hillside towards the Strid with a hound that had shared his earlier sport, fastened to his wrist. Reaching the narrows, he leaped, hoping to do as he had often done before, and light on the other side. But he had forgotten the animal. The hound balked at the jump; his master's attempt was checked; both were plunged into the stream, and perished together. Had he but realized that his safety was only sure after he had loosed himself from the animal! That is a parable for us. Not even God Himself can save England if England's men persist in linking themselves to the beast. God can yet save us if we are prepared to turn from the

iniquitous and the vile and live only for the highest and the best.

God Could Save us by Force, but He will not.

At the end of time God will be surrounded by sons who delight to do His will, not by slaves kept in submission by forces and laws they would gladly break if they could. God will have no servants but by consent. God's saving power is infinite until it comes into collision with a man's own will. He has no omnipotence for the government of human hearts. He can only persuade us to be good ; if that fails, all fails. A little while ago I gave an address on the evils of alcohol. A few days subsequently I received an anonymous post card on which were the words, ' To hell with your teetotalism ! I am going to have my beer.' There is but one answer to that post card, and it is this : If God were a thousand times more God than He is, He can do nothing to save men who are so resolved. There are many who are saying, though the nation goes to pieces, they are determined to have their beer, must have it ; then they will have to endure the nemesis of their own conduct ! To such men God becomes entirely impotent, except in this, that His laws go working on, and the human result of disobedience is precisely what He has declared. The nation that forgets God shall perish. It is true that very high critics try to

comfort us by saying that the word 'perish' does not mean 'destruction'; but their comfort is short-lived when they affirm it means to 'fall asunder from the centre.' If that is not the same thing as destruction, it is sufficiently near it as to make us alarmed. It persuades one not to disobey but to fulfil His law. That is the road along which God saves both men and nations.

God Saves us by Revealing to us the Highest.

He took Moses to the Mount to show him the pattern of the tabernacle. I believe that God takes every man to the Mount to make him know His purpose and His will. I have never known any one who has not had to acknowledge that he has had his moments when he has longed for vastly better things than he has realized—times when he has begun to dream of the splendid possibilities of his nature.

There's not a man
That lives who hath not known his godlike hours,
And feels not what an empire we inherit
As natural beings.

These have been the occasions when God has been revealing His pattern cards of what by His grace men may become. It is interesting to read of Denmark when almost in despair because of what she had lost in battle with Napoleon, and then later, in 1864,

when Germany had taken from her two of her best provinces and one-third of her territory. Despondency, dismay, were everywhere. Hope there was none ; to recover what she had lost was impossible. Then arose Grundvig, who thrilled his nation by declaring, ' All is not lost. We shall gain more than we have had if we begin reconstruction from the very bottom, and learn that what we have lost without we may regain within.' He gained the confidence of the people, and set to work to develop the neglected resources of the country, especially those which were wrapped up in themselves.

The results have been amazing. It is in Denmark that we find the democratic spirit at its highest, education enthusiastically pursued, and the people probably the best informed in Europe. As surely as the method of Grundvig succeeded in Denmark, so surely will the method of militarism fail, not only in Europe, but wherever it is tried. There are enemies that the sword can never slay. The foes that bring nations down are materialism, intemperance, lust, injustice, frivolity, not one of which can be destroyed by the sword. They can only be slain when a nation is upon its knees seeking guidance from the infinitely holy God who still sits upon the throne of the universe. There are victories that militarism can never secure. This deplorable War has rightly raised the prestige of the soldier, but it is

no disparagement of him to say that our nation stands in need of victories which the soldier can never win. With all its faults, I have ever had more faith in the Education Office of the Government than in the War Office, for, after all, the one department only exists for blowing brains out, whilst the other exists for putting them in. Education is essential to the well-being of a nation. It is detracting nothing from the value of the soldier when we say that the Sunday school and the Christian churches do more for building up the Commonwealth than militarism can ever do. There is a glory which excelleth, and it is the glory which belongs to those who have turned many to righteousness ; they shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. When men tell me that as a Christian minister I ought to be paid by results, I answer, ' For God's sake do not say that, or I shall become a millionaire, and I question if I could stand it.' The nation that learns to live unselfishly, that cares supremely for character, and regards the providence of God as its surest safeguard and greatest asset need fear no ill. God saves that nation unto eternal life.

**God Saves us by Making Every Man Responsible
for Some Bit of Empire.**

Many years ago I heard the story of a negro who prayed long and earnestly, ' O God, send a turkey to

this poor nigger.' The turkey was so slow in arriving that he lost hope, and he determined to alter the form of his prayer, which he did to some purpose, 'O God, send this poor nigger to a turkey.' The desired bird soon arrived! The story may be very absurd, but at least it teaches this, that the negro recognized he must do something himself if his prayer was to be answered. Not less do we need the lesson to-day. I confess I have somewhat tired of that hymn which has gained much popularity in some quarters:

When wilt Thou save the people,
O God of Mercy, when?

God only works through human agencies, and at this moment all the plans and purposes of His mighty benevolence are held up in the selfish, worldly hearts of men. God can find no thoroughfare. He no sooner arrives in a man's heart than He discovers He has arrived at a cul-de-sac, or dead end. Recently, as I passed through a long street, I was most interested in noticing that at more than a score of houses the women were busy washing their own paint, and scrubbing their own doorsteps. Those women had solved the problem of how to secure a clean street even in a dirty city. It would be too humbling to apply a lesson drawn from the lives of women to the **MIGHTY WORK OF MEN**. There is, however, no reason why you should not apply it to yourselves.

There is one little bit of empire cleansing and saving for which You are responsible. God can save England, and He will the moment you rise up with the earnest, determined intention of helping Him. God waits for YOU.

XVI

KNOWN BY ITS FRUITS

No claims, however ambitious, can be evidence of the fruit value of any tree. The unanswerable argument is fruit. A vast amount of talk, and not a little temper, might be avoided if this simple fact were acknowledged and acted upon. If the fruit be there, the case is settled ; if it be not there, the case is equally decided, though in a different direction. Not less is this true in the ever-recurring subject of religion. Argument is entirely unnecessary in this age ; religion has been sufficiently long with us to be judged, like the tree, by its fruits. A very learned, illuminating, and powerful address might be delivered upon the very homely maxim which tells us that ' the proof of the pudding is in the eating.' It was once my misery to lodge with a superannuated school-mistress, who endeavoured to persuade me that it was impossible to cook anything without an adequate knowledge of chemistry. So far as my courage would allow, I reminded her that she was not on trial for her chemistry, but for her cooking, and there she signally—failed ! So it is with religion : it must be

judged by its fruits. If religion result in narrowed intellects, declining morality, embittered lives, then no cathedrals, however ornate or ancient, no church, however much 'By Law Established' or however 'Free,' can prevent the hoariest faith in the world from crumbling into ruins. If the fruit be good, then no critics in the world can discredit its source ; if it be bad, no flattering eulogiums can warrant its continuance.

Somewhile ago a man in one of my meetings arose and said he would have nothing to do with religion so long as there were slums and rotting tenements upon the one hand and millionaires upon the other. I had to remind him that, at any rate, it was not religion that made the slums, but the lack of it. The true millionaires created by the Churches are such in hope and gladness. I regret he did not approve of my answer, but experience has taught me that nothing will satisfy a man who finds his supreme satisfaction in dissatisfaction.

We are told that devotion to religion robs men of energy for the temporal affairs of life, and that in an age of stern competition a man cannot afford to be religious when it means less energy for 'keeping his end up' in business or in his daily calling. In answer to all this I would say, 'Let no man be agitated by the charges that are brought against religion.' Nothing is easier than to bring charges ;

the difficulty begins when they have to be proved, and the man will come out best who asks not for 'evidences,' but for the careful catalogue of 'fruits.'

What is the Fruit of Religion when Applied to the Intellect ?

Nothing interests me more than the electrical effect produced upon an audience when a speaker declares, 'As the scientists tell us.' Then every ear is alert. Up to that moment hearers may have been slumbering, but let the phrase be uttered, and the congregation is transformed from a mass of semi-somnolence to an army standing at attention. I greatly rejoice that science is having its innings. No one has room for complaint, least of all the evangelist. Suppose we discover that the finest scientific research and the greatest discoveries of every age have been the fruit of religion, what then ? If a man claims that the intellectual 'numskulls' are largely the product of separation from the mental stimulus of religion, he will not find it difficult to establish his case.

By way of entrance into this intellectual sphere, it is at least a fact of interest to know that the pioneer of scientific research in this country was Roger Bacon, and he was a friar, and was inspired to pursue scientific study and to carry out his research and experiments within the walls of a monastery. I will

not build too much upon that fact, but it is an interesting vestibule through which to pass into the temple of knowledge.

Whether you can name the 'Twelve Apostles' of the New Testament or not, I will presume that, being so much enamoured of science, you will be able to state its twelve chief exponents. In the realm of mathematics there are no greater names than those of Newton and Clark Maxwell; in astronomy the first names are those of Herschel and Adams; Boyle is known as the 'Father of Modern Chemistry,' and after him you must name Dalton; in modern science there is no man who would stand in front of Darwin; in physiology and geology the names of Sir James Simpson and of Adam Sedgwick come first. To these you must add the names of Young, who was mainly instrumental in establishing the undulatory theory of light; Joule, who contributed so largely to prove the conservation of energy; and Faraday, whose brilliant researches opened up the new science of electricity. Here are the chief apostles of science, twelve in number. Of these, eleven are men whose deep Christian belief has been revealed not only in their writings, but still more in their lives. Some, like Newton, spent their money in purchasing and distributing Bibles among the poor; like Herschel, devoted their intellectual power to collecting evidences for the Christian faith;

like Faraday, threw their best energies into the work of the Christian Church ; and one and all consecrated their lives to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, humbly taking up their cross and following after Him. The only apparent exception is the name of Charles Darwin ; yet we read of him saying that if it had not been for his belief in God he could never have devoted forty of his years to study the life and ministry of the earthworm. Moreover, men do not subscribe to that in which they do not believe ; yet we find Darwin subscribing £100 to the London Missionary Society to aid the propagation of the gospel among the heathen abroad.

He will be a bold man who would declare that the intellectual fruits of these men were impoverished because of their faith in the religion of Christ. From another side evidence of the same fruit appears. We think of Wyclif and Erasmus, Calvin and Huss, as great Christian reformers, men who were ever urging the people to the highest truths and to the holiest lives ; but they were also great University dons, and their intellectual eminence did not diminish their religious enthusiasm. Nor, as you come further down the centuries, do you find fruit of a different order. No one will dispute that John Wesley has been the premier evangelist of England, and is known and recognized as such ; but what men frequently forget is that he was Oxford's supreme

prizeman in logic and one of the first of its scholars in Greek. Many talk as if evangelism was cradled in ignorance ; in reality it came to its birth within the walls of a University and in the heart of one of the most gifted of its sons. If you find yourself a thorough-going unbeliever, you must not account for the fact by the largeness of your brain. It has been by the compelling force of truth that the sacred pages of the Holy Bible have brought vision and conviction. Even the brief outline I have attempted proves to the hilt that the human intellect is enlarged and enriched when it links itself to the supreme things of God.

What is the Fruit of Religion when Applied to Morality ?

Here again it is a question of fruit. I presume it will be admitted that morality is a better thing than immorality. If that be so, what is it that aids morality—belief or scepticism ? Here, at any rate, is a statement that can hardly be challenged. Morality is far more the fruit of religion than it is of scepticism.

If you have any doubt about it, then face this fact : if it happen that some professedly religious man has proved himself a scoundrel, the matter becomes the talk of the town ; it is chronicled in full in the newspapers. But common events never

become town's talk ; newspaper proprietors know better how to use their space than to fill their columns with everyday events. It is because of the very rarity of such happenings that they are passed as a sweet morsel from tongue to tongue, and retailed in newspapers that find their *clientèle* amongst those who deride religion and have an appetite for filth.

Purity, truth, honour, integrity, are found at their highest level in the realm of religion, and it is not immodest for the Church and its teachers to say so. Nor is it untrue to say that the finest specimens of humanity in this land, or in any other, are the product of the Christian faith. Yet, forsooth, some man comes along and declares that because he has always paid his debts and has never been in jail, therefore he belongs to the same altitude of character as the man who believes in God and who loves to pray ; he even desires to stand side by side and asks for the superiority to be declared.¹ Imagine two birds meeting each other. One says, ' I have a beak.' ' So have I,' says the other. ' I have two wings,' says one. ' So have I,' says the other. ' I have two legs,' says the one. ' So have I,' says the other. ' Then we are both alike,' says the one. ' No, no,' says the other. ' Your beak is a beak of wax ; mine is one of iron. Your legs spread themselves

¹ Dr. Parker.

to webs, but mine are coils of steel. Your wings flutter about the farmyard, and mine carry me to the gates of the sun. You are a goose, and I am an eagle.' Both are birds ; but when it is said they are both alike, the whole universe utters its protests and its contradiction. The believer and unbeliever may be alike in certain well-defined surface and unimportant matters ; but let there come a crisis, and the man of faith will soar upwards through the clouds, whilst the unbeliever will sink into the blackness of despair. The fruit of faith is holy living and triumphant joy ; the fruit of unfaith is weariness and disappointment of spirit.

What is the Fruit of Religion in Practical Life ?

Perhaps I may put best what I want to say in the form of a question. How would you like to make your home in any county in England from which every trace of religion had been rigorously excluded ? You may be so situated that you can choose any county you desire for residence. Seriously, whatever the beauty of the place, whatever the natural advantages, would you care to choose as the county for your abode a place where there are no churches and no ministers, where there are none who have learned the blessedness of prayer, none who have learned the golden rule to do unto others as they would that others should do to them, where not a

single inhabitant ever had before his mind a vision of the Great White Throne before which he must one day appear? Would you feel quite happy in making your abode in such a place? You know you would not. The world has too many dishonourable people in it already, and, what is more, they are not confined within prison walls. They are the men who will not go to church, who find their sport and jest in religion, and yet all their life through are reaping advantages from the religion of others, from religious neighbours who are what they are because they believe in God and try to serve Him.

There are a great many who, like Voltaire, do not themselves believe in God, but are very anxious their neighbours should; they feel safer, and know that their interests are better served. Go where you will the evidence of this fact abounds. Again, to quote Darwin, who was many a league, perhaps, from what some would regard as an orthodox churchman, but no one, as far as I know, has ever impugned his sincerity; it is he who says, 'The missionary's lesson is the enchanter's wand.' He means by that it creates civilized habits, slays lust and cruelty, makes the savage gentle, and the cannibal humane. The proof of this is written in history and upon the page of every succeeding year of life. Men talk eloquently of Plato's Republic; but let it come to pass, and the greater half of the human race would

pass into slavery, and the callings of artisans and tradesmen would be despised. How do these things look in the light of Christian teaching? You know that they take upon themselves a new meaning and a greater glory.

What is the Fruit of Religion in a Complete Life?

We know of scholars who have so devoted themselves to study that their health has suffered. Some have so given themselves to one branch of knowledge that they have lost all taste for others. Multitudes have so lived for their bodies that their brains have been forgotten. A man, however, no sooner enters into the spirit of religion than he enters at least upon the threshold of a full-orbed life ; body, mind, soul, are all enriched.

Greek literature tells us that no statue could be erected to the memory of any athlete who had not excelled in all five branches of athletics, lest it should leave the suspicion that one part of his body had been developed at the expense of another ; but the Grecians made no pretence of caring for the soul. Do you see how this works? A man may have a perfect physical frame, and yet have a mind atrophied and useless ; what you get then is an imbecile. A man may have a perfect body, but be void of all moral sense ; and what you get then is a devil. Make the Lord of Life your King, and you will

recognize then that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost ; you will train your mind to look upon the great expanses of literature and art and science, and revel in them all. Bring your life into submission to the will of God, and your soul will develop into fitness for communion with the Divine. The fruit of religion will be revealed in an enlarged and fuller life, of which the end is a position amongst the glorified sons of God.

XVII

A LOST BATTLE, BUT A VICTORIOUS CAMPAIGN

MEN are not to be 'scrapped' because of temporary failures. There would be no gospel for this world if it could not be said that a failure, a slip, or even a great fall, must not be regarded as a full stop to a man's career, but only a comma, which shall not prevent ultimate triumph. I remember how one day I visited the Bay of Naples, and saw what remains of the Temple of Serapis. What a sermon that old temple preached! There are but three surviving columns, but they have a mighty message. For about seven or eight feet the marble is perforated by the borings of a marine insect, which borings are visible to the naked eye. A geologist explained that this temple, erected more than twenty centuries ago, had passed through some strange experiences. The ground upon which the temple stands has evidently been submerged to the depth of nearly twenty feet, and for long periods these pillars were exposed to the ravages of salt water. Then there must have been another geological upheaval which lifted the ground and its temple to their former eminence. When it sunk below the waters the insects of the deep had eaten

their way into the pure marble, and traces of their destructive work remain to this day. No one prophesied that, though the waters should overwhelm that temple and submerge it, it would some day emerge again and stand in its former place in the sunlight. And yet so it is. That is a sermon in stone. If there is power to raise such a temple from the ocean depths into which it had been submerged, I believe there is power somewhere that will raise the dishonoured and disfigured human temple from its shame and bring it back to its former glory. It is my business to search for the power that can perform this herculean task.

There are Multitudes who have Lost Battles.

But the man who has lost a battle is not necessarily beaten ; the battle is only an incident in a campaign. If that is not true, what hope is there for humanity at large ? Every man living has had his moment of failure ; every man has his weak spot. It was a true insight into the reality of things that made the lame man put himself at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. That man knew where to go. The Church loses its power when it allows men to regard it, or when it regards itself, as a society of ' cured individuals.' It is nothing of the kind ; it is just a hospital where the inmates are suffering from all kinds of diseases. The bright spot about the business is that there are

no incurable complaints, and the dark spot is that the *patients* are *too patient*—they are not in half the hurry they ought to be to be healed. Every man in the Church is the man who has been wounded somewhere or other in the conflict with Satan, and has come to Christ for healing. Therefore the man who has lost in his battle and has not come to the temple need not despair ; all that he needs is the healing touch of Jesus and a new beginning. I have learnt many a lesson from the salesmen of the streets, especially at Christmas time, when they stand in the gutters to sell their amazing goods. I have seen a man selling pavement toys that were tremendous boxers or champion runners who entered with mighty zest into their work. I noticed, however, that in a moment or two the poor tin toy soon became exhausted, fell down, and rolled into the gutter. Then the salesman had to pick him up and wind up the works, set him on his feet, and with renewed vigour the process began again. All went well for a few seconds, and then, alas, the tin champion was again in the gutter. I have often thought that I might have purchased a gross of those toys and distributed them as representations of my church members ; but I should have had the grace to keep one for myself. The fact that some men do not fall in precisely the same way as others is no proof that they have not fallen. The fact that their affairs

have never become public property is no guarantee that they have not failed in their obligations to God. Failure is not the qualification for the scrap-heap, but for the Saviour.

Failure is no Reason for Despair.

The greatest scientific discoveries have only been secured after repeated defeats ; the finest achievements of art have only been reached after innumerable attempts have been consigned to the flames. The best work that ever came from Robert Louis Stevenson only appeared after he had rewritten it scores of times ; early failures to express what he desired to say never daunted him. Victors in all realms of knowledge have had their lost battles, and it is well for them, and for us, that they were not sent to the scrap-heap before they had had another chance. Nansen says that ' the obstacles that lay between civilization and the North Pole, terrific as they were, would not subdue the determination of Peary.' It is all very well for Nansen to write like that of his friend ; we have only his word for it, and we do know that Peary failed and failed again. That is true, but it is untrue if at the word ' failed ' you put a full stop. Go on, read on, and we come to this : ' He went on failing until the silver crept into his hair, but when sixty years of age he reached triumphant success.' Then the world nearly

screamed itself hoarse in its hurraing over the success which, though long delayed, had come at last. I do not complain at the cheering that greeted the victory of Peary ; I am not jealous. Only I do want a little of the cheering to be reserved for some of the men I know who have fought some lonely battles in the region of character and have failed many times, but are coming off magnificent conquerors at the last.

The causes of failure may be many. There are inherited tendencies, unfriendly environments, dissipated wills. Beyond all these there is, in addition, the cruel fact that society frequently makes it only too easy for a man to fall in battle, or to slide into the depths of evil where rescue is not impossible, but enormously difficult. I have read that those who make it their hobby or recreation to descend into the depths of Alpine glaciers find no difficulty in their descent. It is when the depth has been reached and the return journey has to be attempted that the difficulties begin. We are told that many daring explorers have lost their hope and their grip, and have tumbled back into the depths to rise no more ; and no wonder. Alas that it should be true that men have found it easier to descend than to ascend ! The ascent may be steep, arduous, difficult, but, thank God, not impossible, if we can get help from above. God, whose temple you are, will see

to it, if you want to return to your former glory and be fit for His indwelling, that His power shall be at your service ; and through His grace you shall be crowned with glorious victory.

God Intends that Victory shall yet Crown Defeat.

I often think of the character in Bunyan's *Holy War* who is called the ' man with the long name,' namely, ' Mr. Get-i'-the-hundred-and-lose-i'-the-shire.' He is meant to represent the man who wins the small and loses the great ; the man who wins the present good, but loses the eternal. There are a great many of these men in the world, no doubt ; but I am not less certain that there are also those who resemble this gentleman with the long name only when it is reversed. There are those who ' lose-i'-the-hundred-and-gain-i'-the-shire ' ; those who have lost the present, but gained the everlasting future ; lost money, but gained Christ ; lost a battle, but won a campaign.

Sir Walter Scott through no fault of his own became a bankrupt ; but that bankruptcy turned him into a hero, and has covered his name with imperishable glory. John Newton was a drunken man of dissolute habits ; his falls were oft and deep ; but there came the day of victory which has blotted out the memory of his falls. He had left behind him a record of holy service which will enshrine his

name in everlasting remembrance. John B. Gough fell so low that times without number he was found lying in the gutter. One who was too weak to raise him from his place of degradation did what she could by covering his face with a clean white handkerchief that the strength of the sun might not beat too fiercely upon his face. That handkerchief spoke to him of his mother and his God, and he arose, and the battles that he had lost were forgotten in the campaign that he won, and the thousands that he led into sobriety and holiness of life. In one of the galleries upon the Continent may be seen a marble statue which was found broken into hundreds of pieces. It was the one statue for which one artist cared supremely. He begged that he might be set to work upon the pieces, and so skilfully and lovingly did he do his work that the figure stands to-day with every piece in its place, and it takes a scrutinizing eye to discover where the fractures have been. If you have fallen—and you have—there is more than a skilled artist waiting to have his chance with you ; there is a mighty Saviour 'who will, if you will allow Him, restore to you the very image and likeness of God which you have lost. The gospel of this message for you lies in Jacob's prophecy concerning his son Gad, when he said, 'Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at LAST !'

XVIII

SYMPATHETIC SHIRKERS

IN this meeting for men only, and in the absence of all reporters, there can be no harm in acknowledging just amongst ourselves that sometimes a woman is gifted with the supreme power of vision ! To deny this initial fact would only bring us to greater difficulties later on. Therefore, with all the grace at our command, let it be acknowledged that at a terrible crisis in the history of Israel things would have become a great deal worse had it not been for the leadership and vision of a woman. Her name was Deborah. When she sent forth her bugle-call to rally the tribes together there was a splendid and gratifying result, but not so splendid that Deborah failed to miss the absentees.

There was the tribe of Reuben, who, to use a modern phrase, was 'greatly exercised in its mind' concerning the righteousness of the cause and the desirability of the victory. The difficulty was that it preferred the sheep-field to the battlefield. To be perfectly fair to the Reubenites, it must be admitted that they were very anxious for the victory ; the

only difficulty was that they could not be persuaded to fight for it. They had a theory of their own concerning the division of labour : ' Let it be the lot of others to secure the victory and our lot to enjoy it.' My only difficulty lies in the fact that Reuben is spoken of as one of the ' lost tribes.' Lost, indeed ! The Reubenites have never been lost. I am always meeting them. They are the ones who want to do the shouting whilst others do the fighting. Lost, indeed ! I only wish they were ; the trouble is that they are ever in evidence.

Think of the Conflict.

This was a terrible battle that had to be fought out between Israel and Canaan. How much more terrible the War to-day ! Never has there been such a colossal conflict in the history of the world ; and yet I am not thinking of its vastness, but of its smallness. It is only a comma, a punctuation in the world's history, compared with another war that is ceaselessly being waged, that passes on from century to century, and yet secures but small and insignificant comment. Indeed, this terrible War between Germany and the civilized world is but one phase of the agelong conflict to which I refer. It is the conflict between right and wrong. At one time it is God or Baal, at another it is Christ or Barabbas, at another it is Militarism or Liberty, but

however it is named the principle behind is ever the same. Sometimes we are told this will be the last war. I live in no fool's paradise of that order. War will never be ended by war ; Satan never drives out Satan. Evil is never destroyed by a manifestation of its results. Jails do not breed honesty. Public-houses do not propagate sobriety. Wars do not establish peace societies. The end of war will only come when men of their own free-will choose to follow the will of God. This is the war behind all war, the conflict behind all conflict : whether God or the devil shall prevail. From this war there is no escape. Conscription is an established fact. The only choice that is permitted is for you to select your side. Let it help you to decide to know that the ultimate issue is certain. You may delay it, but you cannot prevent it. The pages of history tell us this : the Pharaohs, the Sennacheribs, the Ahabs, the Neros, the Alvas, the Napoleons, all go down ; whilst the Elijahs and Isaiahs and Hampdens live through all generations. Wickedness may die hard, but it dies. God can win His battles without our aid ; you can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. All the forces of Nature are at His command, but woe to those who come not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty !

The Sympathetic Shirker is often Correct in Opinion, but Cowardly in Conduct.

The Reubenites were in sympathy heart and soul with Deborah. If it had been a question of subscribing to a testimonial for her, they would have come out handsomely; there would have been a genuine competition as to who should be at the top of the list. When, however, it was a matter of fighting, the most they could be persuaded to do was to express sympathy with the object in hand! God only knows the trouble that is caused by people of good heart but weak will, the people who have *half a mind* to help. What records the world has to show of the ghastly failures of the men who have had 'half a mind' to study, to paint, to build, to wrestle, to fight! Their monuments are not found in our cathedrals, but in our slums and workhouses and jails. A man may be courageous in speech and yet cowardly in conduct. Mrs. Disraeli said of her famous husband, 'Dizzy has wonderful moral courage, but he lacks the physical. He always sends for me to pull the string of his shower-bath!'

Contrast the life-story of Erasmus with that of Luther. As a thinker Erasmus was a hero, a pioneer. He knew no fear of the mental revolution that might occur from the welcoming of a new thought. Those who were opposed to new visions and larger conceptions of truth he smote hip and thigh. So long

as thoughts had only to be *thought* he stood forth as a mighty leader, but the moment thought had to be translated into action he shook like an aspen ; his prowess had gone. It was then that Luther shone. He carried his new-found truths to the market-place. His thoughts became words and his words hammers that smote error with mortal blows. This is ancient history that may be brought up to date. The fact is the tribe of Reuben will never be lost until there is no sign anywhere of a man who is afraid to put into practice the things he knows to be right. At present the tribe is not only international, it is interdenominational, it is everywhere. The world is full of nice men, and polite men, and correct men who are perfect masters in points of order and amendments and substantive resolutions ; but woe to you if you lean upon them in a crisis ! They will offer you sugar-plums when you need shot ; and if there is an election that is to decide some great moral issue, they will tell you in the most approved phraseology they certainly would have gone to the polling-booth and have voted for you, but they had promised to play a game of golf, or to ' lend a hand ' at a game of whist !

There are multitudes of men to-day who are sighing for all kinds of moral victories, but they act as though they expected them to be brought to their bedside by registered post. The very nearest you can get

to their active participation in bringing about a better day is that they will, when thoroughly roused, propose a resolution : ' That this tribe of Reubenites heartily sympathizes with the ideal of freedom for which the people of Israel are now engaged in conflict, and greatly deplores the hardships and cruelties to which it is subjected. It is, nevertheless, of the opinion that the time for definite action has not yet arrived, and would suggest that a conference should be called at some convenient time in the future, but not later than five years from the present date, in order to report progress and choose suitable leaders.' I have known scores of occasions when that resolution would pass with absolute unanimity and even with enthusiasm, but it would do nothing to bring in the kingdom of God.

Correct ideas are of no service if they are only to be wrapped up in cotton-wool to be looked at in private. They are to govern your conduct and to direct your practice in the shop and market-place. Never forget that your conduct is not to be governed by your comfort, but by your convictions.

The Sympathetic Shirker Claims his Share in the Victories Won, but Refuses to Share the Toil which was Necessary to Win them.

Apply this to the subject of drink reform. There are hundreds of thousands of people in the country

to-day who want their families to grow up temperate in habit and sober in conduct. They are indignant if a man rolls past their door in a state of intoxication ; and if he should be at all noisy in his passing, they regard it as an affront to their respectability, for they declare, ' It lets the property down ! ' But these very individuals will not touch a temperance society with a long pole. They would not tell their neighbour that they had signed the pledge lest they should miss his invitation to the next party. A prominent church official, who, indeed, was a great Reubenite, said to me that he did not see why temperance societies could not be worked more privately ; for his part he did not like to make himself objectionable to any one. ' No,' I said, ' not even to the publicans ! '

It is not the presence of the drink that troubles me ; that could be overcome. It is the fact that so many want a sober England who will not lift a finger to secure it ; that is the burden. Doubtless there are many things in this address from which you differ. Then before closing let us have one point of agreement. You will not differ from me when I say that if the boys of to-day live another twenty years they will be men. Is there perfect agreement between us ? Then take one other point. Do you agree that the kind of men they will make largely depends upon their training ? We are

surely agreed upon that too. Are we agreed also upon the fact that we want them to be good? Yes, happily there is agreement between us there also. Then do not let us quarrel when I ask, What are *you* doing to secure the result? Ah! I am sorry if you have not time to finish the argument.

Just listen to this before we close. I had been to a strange church to preach. At the conclusion of the service I saw about a hundred and twenty boys who belonged to the Boys' Brigade line up outside the church. They all seemed in fine trim and in good order. Then there came the captain, but in appearance he was no beauty; his physique was poor in the extreme, his legs were crooked, and there were other irregularities I need not mention. Nevertheless, he knew how to give the orders and how to secure prompt obedience. I listened to his instructions, and was filled with admiration as I thought of the obstacles and difficulties he had to overcome in order to secure the great end he had in view. At that moment a man in the most approved garments—trousers of faultless crease, gloves without stain—came to me and said, 'Does it not look absurd that a deformed man should be placed over a number of boys for such a purpose?' He assured me how heartily he believed in the work, and said the efforts on behalf of the boys were most praiseworthy, but it was outrageous that such a crooked man

should be placed in so prominent a position. Then it was I asked if he had ever volunteered for the post. He said, 'No.' I asked if he had ever done anything for any boy he was anxious should develop well. He said he could not say that he had. Then I said, 'My dear man, for God's sake, keep silent, unless, indeed, you want to confess your own shabbiness for blaming a man of physical drawbacks for heroically attempting a work you have been too lazy to touch.' It may be that you too are amongst those who desire the boys of to-day to be glorious men of the future. Then abandon your rôle of a sympathetic shirker, and become an active helper in the cause you wish to triumph.

XIX

TWENTIETH-CENTURY SCAPEGOATS

THE word 'scapegoat' finds no place in our modern vocabulary. It is a verbal antique. To make it live over again we should have to travel backwards twenty centuries and find ourselves in a strange country amid strange customs. It is, however, interesting to have a peep into the ancient world to see how our ancestors thought and lived.

The ritual of the Jewish Church was rich in its variety, picturesque in its magnificence, and sublime in its meaning. It may be without present-day significance, but for all that there is pleasure as well as profit in having a look into the temple worship of bygone days.

The scapegoat was connected with the greatest event of Jewish worship, the Day of Atonement, the great day of the temple year. The priest brought a live goat and confessed over him all the sins of the people, and put them upon the head of the goat, which was then driven away into the wilderness; and the goat bore upon him all the iniquities of the people into a solitary land.

That is the ancient and true meaning of the word 'scapegoat.' Some may say we have nothing

answering to that in our day. Perhaps you may think differently before we have completed our story. It is perfectly true that in our religion we need no scapegoat, for the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world has come. It is, nevertheless, abundantly manifest that though the Jewish scapegoat has gone, and gone for ever, less worthy scapegoats are allowed to remain.

It may bring you into the very heart of what I want to say if I remind you that there have been disasters in war, even serious defeats, which have roused the public anger by affronting national pride. The verdict has been that some one must be made to suffer. National anger must be placed somewhere ; and it is. It by no means follows that the one who suffers is the one who is guilty. It may happen that the one who was responsible bore a great name, or had a great position, or had great influence, and therefore must be shielded ; while the punishment and anger is allowed to fall upon an innocent victim. That is the modern example of the scapegoat. There are not a few who are searching for scapegoats to-day, in order that they may throw the blame and responsibility of wrong doing upon others. This has become one of the distinguishing fashions of the day. I want to indicate some of the twentieth-century scapegoats that have come into recent prominence.

There is the Man who Finds his Scapegoat in Heredity.

Men blame their ancestors for their sins because they cannot put in an appearance to prove their innocence. They are obliged to rest under a charge which they cannot disprove. Heredity has gained enormously in popularity because it makes such an excellent scapegoat. The falsity of it, however, appears when we discover how eager men are to have their virtues put down to their own credit and their vices to the account of their grandfathers. I do not dispute the fact that there is a very painful and serious truth in heredity. Men are having conflicts with the devil at very close quarters all because of the evil living of those who have gone before. This, however, is not the whole of the truth. A man told me not long ago that his grandfather decided his fate for him before he was born, that his dead relations still held him in their relentless grip, there was no such thing as freedom, and that God was unjust. Heredity was his scapegoat. I replied, in the words of Chesterton, 'He might go round and round just as a passenger on the Inner Circle Railway might keep on going round and round unless he performed the voluntary and vigorous act of getting out at Gower Street !'

It never occurred to him that he could choose

his own destination, and yet, as a matter of fact, he was doing so every day of his life. He had entirely overlooked the fact that gutter children, heirs of generations of vice, who, according to his theory, should have been irrecoverably damned body and soul, had instead grown into God-fearing citizens. Heredity can be corrected. Luther Burbank, the Californian horticulturist, has proved again and again that trees that have been going to the bad for centuries can have their evils corrected and be put upon better lines of growth. That is still more true of man. Heredity can be corrected. The gospel of the grace of God can change your whole life, and you may have that for the asking. Man's recoverableness from desperate conditions is the wonder and glory of his history. 'Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' It will not do for you to make heredity your scapegoat, for men who have inherited the worst of tendencies, and who have been cradled in the worst of vices, have in cases innumerable been made over again, born anew. This is one of the best-attested facts of history, and to continue to make heredity your scapegoat will only mean that at last it will turn again and rend you.

There is the Man who Finds his Scapegoat in Environment.

That is to say, the man who acquits his ancestors arraigns his neighbourhood. It was Henry Drummond who made this word live amongst us. I sometimes think, had he known the evil uses to which it has been put, he might have been more guarded in its use. The fact is many were in search of a scapegoat. They did not want to bear the responsibility for their sins; and if they were to escape the cowardice of blaming their ancestors, they must find another scapegoat, and they found it in environment. If a man is drunken, he is not to blame, but the public-houses in the street in which he resides. If he is immoral, the blame belongs not to him, but to the immoral theatrical placards which are ever staring him in the face and encouraging vice. If a man is dishonest, he must not be blamed, but the artistically decorated windows which are ever exposing to view articles which are not his own, but which he covetously desires. Environment is the scapegoat which must bear his iniquities.

It may be readily granted that a man is influenced by the neighbourhood in which he lives. The Italian peasant is the gayest-hearted of men, living, as he does, beneath sunny skies and beside the blue

waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The Highland Celt is one of the most silent and serious and reverent of men, living, as he does, at the foot of the great and lonely mountains that are draped in mists. That is true, all true ; but not the whole of the truth, because men are not mummies, they have the power to make, to alter, to remake, their environment. A man who enters a business house where there are sordid views of life, and where the intellectual and spiritual ideals are low, can either correct the atmosphere into which he has entered, or he can inhale it ; and what he becomes is not the fault of his environment, but of himself.

Outside Rome there is a monastery that was originally built in one of the miasmal portions of the city, the great marshy plain that extends for miles. When the monks went there first they found the air laden with damp and with so much else that was poisonous that man after man died as the result of the malarial environment. To one of the monks, however, there came a happy thought of planting eucalyptus-trees, and the worthy fathers acted upon it to such good effect that now, thanks to the trees, the whole place has been made anew and the health of the inhabitants excellent. That monk refused to allow environment to continue its dangerous influence upon the life of himself or his fellows. It will not do to make your environment

your scapegoat. If you can cease to be a man, and become a thing, then the environment may affect you as the atmosphere affects the trunk of a tree that has fallen and that causes it to decay ; but if you are alive with the life of a MAN that was intended to be yours, You can make your environment your servant, your stepping-stone to higher and nobler things.

There is the Man who Makes Society his Scapegoat.

Round about us everywhere men are blaming their fellows, their workmates, their companions, for all the evil they do. It has ever been so. Men make society their scapegoat. Adam had not possessed the society of his wife very long, but, not knowing what else to do with her, he made her his scapegoat : ' The woman whom Thou gavest me, she gave me to eat.' You never say to a man in a crowd, ' Do not push,' but he will say, ' I'm not pushing, it's the people behind ! ' I am often amused at the pathetic way in which I hear men talk ; the sympathy they expend upon themselves is astounding. They try to persuade themselves and us into believing that they are after all only tiny cockle-shell boats tossing about on the great ocean of life without a rudder, without a chart, and without a guide. They forget that they are far more to be compared to mighty ocean steamers equipped for

all storms and furnished with a chart that tells of hidden rocks and a compass that directs their course. Sometimes they come and, with tears in their eyes, say how weak they are ; they have no will ! The moment I ask them to do what they do not want the will comes into evidence, and they are as stubborn as mules ; and yet they plead that others can turn them round their fingers, and they blame them for being wicked enough to do it. They blame everybody but themselves. The one fact that they will not acknowledge is the glorious position which is theirs if only they will claim it, and that is, God has created them as men to HAVE DOMINION. Depend upon it, God has not so created men to allow them to make scapegoats of every influence that plays around their life. Society will, like heredity and environment, prove itself an ineffectual scapegoat.

There is but one scapegoat for you, and that is the Lamb of God. He will bear all your sins away, but on the one condition that you abandon all other scapegoats and acknowledge your own faults, take upon yourself the responsibility of your own wrongdoing, admit your guilt, confess the evil of your own heart ; and then, like the mighty Saviour He is, He will bear away your sins, and that for ever.

XX

A NATION DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF

WHEN the Pharisees had to account for the expulsion of devils by the word of Christ, they experienced no difficulty, and had no doubt of the accuracy of their findings. These men looked wisely at each other, and felt there was no secret as to how it was done : ' This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.'

They failed to see the absurdity of their own explanation. The Pharisees were so sharp that, like the priests of Baal, they cut themselves ; but it was their sense rather than their blood that gushed out. They failed to see that if Satan were to cast out Satan, his kingdom would be overthrown by his own hand. In this way they made a fool of the very devil to whom they were attributing such mysteries of wonder.

Our Lord illustrates their folly by recording a mere commonplace, so amazingly common that it had not occurred to these theological carpenters, that ' a house divided against itself cannot stand.' The moment it is stated it is self-evident. What,

however, is true of the divided house is true of the divided nation, and that is the one point which now concerns us.

A Nation Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand.

There is no room to hope that it will : our Lord says it '*cannot*.' It comes to this, that when Germany is beaten our nation may yet fall to pieces, not by reason of the uprising of another foe, but because of the fissures which are dividing our national life. These are so menacing, so dangerous, that unless there is some way of unifying our Empire, her downfall is certain. My business at the moment is not to discover causes or to apportion blame, but to reveal facts. Perhaps then some step may be taken towards national unity, which is the only way towards permanence and peace.

There is the Fissure Between the Classes.

Voltaire used to say that British society was like a cask of beer, the top of which was froth and scum, the bottom nothing but sediment and dregs, the middle alone being genuine and clear. I do not accept that illustration, but it does remind me that we allow society, as a great preacher has said, 'to be divided by horizontal lines, and affix the names "upper," "middle," and "lower."' But our Lord draws a perpendicular line, and puts 'sheep' and

'goats.' That is to say, the only division is one of character and not of income or of occupation. To-day in our land, in this twentieth century of civilization, men of the same race are as irrevocably divided as if they belonged to different hemispheres. My experience leads me to affirm that this folly of precedence is not confined to one class; it is a species of vulgar snobbery which affects every section of society.

I had to do with a bazaar that was to be opened by a countess. When requested to perform the kindly function, she graciously consented. The placards on the walls of the town announced that 'Lady So-and-so would open the bazaar.' Then she rudely wrote to say that she had not the slightest intention of being present. When asked to explain her reason, she manifested great indignation, and said to announce her as 'Lady' was simply to put her on the level with the wife of a knight or a baronet—an insult she could not endure. After all, the countess was nearer to the truth than she imagined: she *had no right* to the title 'Lady'! A book has been recently published in which there is the story that one of the Dukes of Norfolk desired to have a great family gathering, to which every member of every branch of the family should be invited. Much work was involved, and enthusiastically undertaken, to trace in all directions those who had

any of the ducal blood in their veins. All went well. Expensive displays of old-time events were to be acted, the Norfolk jewels were to be on view, all decorations worn ; the scene was to be one of untold magnificence. Suddenly the whole scheme was abandoned ; not a word was heard, not a whisper breathed ; but mystery, like murder, will out. It had been discovered that a far descendant of an earlier duke, through a plebeian marriage, was a lodge-keeper on one of the estates. That discovery spoiled all. To pass a lodge-keeper and give him a kindly nod at a ducal gate is one thing, but to welcome him into the bosom of the ducal family is quite another !

One day in my ministry I received a letter stained with tears. It came from a member of my congregation, who said, ' Please come at once ; we are in terrible trouble ! ' When I reached the house I found nearly the whole family in convulsions ; they had wept and wept until they could weep no more. My heart ached for them, and I said, ' What is the matter ? ' I thought nothing less than the father being in jail or the eldest son discovered dead could have accounted for such anguish. At last I was told the family sorrow. The eldest daughter, a child of thirty-five years of age, without asking consent, had married a pork-butcher ! ' But why this agony ? ' I asked. ' Is the man a burglar ? '

They said, 'No.' 'Then don't you like pork?' I further asked; to which they replied, 'Yes, it isn't that.' 'Then what is it?' 'Oh, the disgrace of having a family connected with pork!' But the depths of this social snobbery are not reached yet. In my mission I arranged for the lodging-house services to be held in one large gathering rather than have many small ones in different places. At the close of one meeting a man came and asked me, 'Do you intend to repeat the experience every Sunday evening?' I replied, 'Certainly.' Then he said, 'I shall not come. You have men here who only pay threepence a night for their beds, and I pay sixpence; I shall not associate with them.'

This class antagonism is not confined to one portion of the community; it is in all. No clearer proof is required that there is something radically wrong in human nature that permits it. It is not a cause of levity; it is a tragedy, tearing out the heart of the nation and making it impossible to fulfil the purpose of God. Furthermore, wherever this spirit is it is manifest that men are not ready for the golden days of brotherhood for which they profess to long. For men who are already sons of God, a position for which character and not wealth or status is the supreme requisite, it is absurd to tolerate divisions which in the highest estimate of all matter

as little as the height of a man's stature or the colour of his hair. I do not believe in all that was done in the name of the French Revolution, but I do believe its motto of 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' was divinely inspired. My heart loathes the childish distinctions which are allowed to govern us to-day like a rod of iron. So long as these silly divisions are permitted to rule, unity of purpose is impossible ; and a nation divided against itself, from whatsoever cause, is a nation that cannot stand.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-grey and a' that ;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that ;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

There is the Fissure Between Labour and Capital.

The supreme gravity of this fissure is recognized ; every man who is not a candidate for Bedlam acknowledges it. At this moment there is a great ground-swell of seething discontent. It is no solution of the problem to ignore it, or to go on living as if it did not exist. I would not say one word to increase party bitterness. It must, however, be plainly recognized that this discontent, which no one denies, is not going to be rolled back into

quiescence ; it will rise in intensity and volume until justice is reached, or, if that be denied, then there will be chaos and anarchy, in which gain will come to none, but loss and misery to all.

The interests of capital and labour are identical ; to deny it does not alter the fact. These things cannot be like the Jews and Samaritans, and have no dealings with each other. They must work together ; and unless it is done amicably, with a due regard to the rights of each, the land is doomed. Labour cannot proceed one inch without capital, but capital is not less stagnant without the aid of labour. As I have said, it is not my business to deal with causes, or to call one side or the other ' guilty ' ; nor is it my work to apply remedies. It is, however, my duty to enunciate with all my power the principle of love, of good-will and justice. There would be no real gain in taking from the oppressor, however much he has, and giving it to the covetous because he has little. That course would not be pursued far before positions were reversed, but the evil would not be cured.

Believe me, I am sorry in my heart for rich men. Think of how they rely upon their gold ; it is their all ! Then see its effects upon them ; it eats into their life like a canker. No wonder our Lord should say, ' How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven ! ' Wealth is an

advantage ; but, like all other advantages, it has to be paid for, and the price that is paid for it is a hard heart !

I am sorry for the poor ; but God is my witness, I would rather change places with the poor, who out of their poverty are continually manifesting a wonderful generosity to others. Surely this is better than finding that the more you have the more you want and the less you give.

I have had the opportunity of perusing this week the figures which have been presented to the Government Commission of Inquiry into some of the causes of dissatisfaction amongst labour. I have seen the profits of certain outstanding firms. Of the accuracy of the returns there is no dispute, but the profits are nothing short of alarming, and when viewed in connexion with the wages of the workers they become ominous indeed. There is not much further to travel along that road before disaster comes.

It has been stated in the newspapers, without contradiction, so far as I have seen, that the White Star Company have this year made a profit of £2,400,000 on a capital of three and a quarter millions. The directors from this vast amount had set aside a paltry sum of £10,000 for the superannuation fund of the men who had risked their lives in making it. Such handling of the profits is a scandalous outrage on the community. The country only

needs to be awakened to the facts of the case, and it will take its own methods in putting an end to such cruel injustice towards those who have earned the money.

Some day those who are enjoying their sail through life in their first-class upper cabins will hear a crash which will tell them more plainly than the voice of Parliament that they have arrived at the place for which they have been steering, and that is—on the rocks !

I remember hearing the story of a preacher riding in a trap behind a runaway horse. He turned to the driver and said, ' I would give half-a-crown to be out of this trap.' ' Keep your half-crown,' said the driver ; ' you'll be out for nothing in a moment ! ' That is what I am afraid of ; unless something can be done to pacify the steed and turn its head in a safer direction, we shall all be over the precipice before long.

There is no pacification in the continuation of injustice, and nothing is settled that is not settled right. At this moment men are working in heated and steam-laden atmospheres for a number of consecutive hours that would be financially disastrous to the employers to work their horses. They breathe poisonous fumes and handle chemicals and liquids which the Government have had to schedule as dangerous. They deal with weights of cloth

that, medical evidence declares, have produced rupture to such an extent that the Government has felt it necessary to take steps to reduce these burdens. They produce fabrics of the finest texture and silks and cottons of the most dazzling shades, which are shipped to other countries, whilst the people who have woven them have to be content with shoddy and rags.

It cannot well be denied that the cause of the French Revolution was the hard reality of inexpressible misery 'brushed by the rustling masquerade' of careless luxury. One day, as Louis XV was hunting in the wood of Senart, away from his gorgeous and guilty Palace of Versailles, he met a ragged peasant with a coffin. 'What did the man die of?' asked the king. 'Of hunger,' answered the serf; and the king gave his steed the spurs. When Foulon was asked how the overtaxed people were to live, he brutally answered, 'Let them eat grass.' Afterwards the mob, maddened into wild beasts, caught him in the streets of Paris, stuck his head on a pike, and filled his mouth with grass.

We do not want a repetition of this in England. The only word that need be said is that the same causes have a habit of bringing about the same results.

The object for which I plead is the recognition of justice and love between man and man; that every

man has a right to those things which are necessary for a sound, healthy, full-orbed life. When a man has love in his heart for his fellows, he will cease to do wrong towards them. When this day comes, as come in the good providence of God it will, the fissure will be healed.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that ;
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the palm, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that.

There is the Fissure Between the Churches ; or, as I prefer to put it, there is the Fissure IN the Church.

It is here where the depth of humiliation is reached. I am not disturbed over the varying views of the respective sections of the Church. So long as there is individuality and a variety of temperament, these things must remain, and, what is more, they may be helpful rather than harmful.

It is, however, a very different matter when one section of the Church looks with suspicion upon another section, and even denies the validity of a ministry which has not been cut entirely after its own pattern. One of the petitions heard from week to week in a Mohammedan mosque is, ' That it may

please God to prevent Christians from settling their controversies.' The Mohammedans have much cause to feel that God answers their prayers. In very truth, the devil prays the same prayers. He lives upon our discordances; there is joy in the presence of the angels of hell over every fight that divides and enfeebles the Church. How is it possible for the nation to believe in an all-loving Christ, who loves His children without distinction, when He is represented by those who will not speak to each other or believe in each other's work? The fissures in society are at least understandable, but here they are unpardonable.

The road the Church has travelled through the centuries has been towards disunity, and the way has been dark and dreary enough. Is it not time that it turned to journey towards unity? It is certain that if the Church is to take any worthy part in helping the nation in the difficult days that are to come it will require all its time, thought, and energy for constructive work, not for hampering or belittling the labour of those who do not think exactly as it thinks.

I have no desire to enter into any controversy. I will certainly see to it that no bitter word is expressed by me, for there is no bitter thought in my heart. I do want to know, however, why it is not possible to secure one Anglican clergyman in the city

of Bradford to address the world-famed Eastbrook Brotherhood? To-day it has a solid membership of TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED MEN, WITH AN ATTENDANCE DURING THIS FOURTH YEAR OF WAR OF NEARLY TWO THOUSAND. It is composed of men from all the Churches and of no Church. The members do not ask for an address on politics, Socialism, or education; they desire most of all heart-to-heart talks upon their relationship with God and God's attitude towards them. The Brotherhood does not exist for the glory of Methodism, but for the glory of God and the salvation of men. Yet, upon these terms, it is not possible to get an Anglican clergyman in Bradford to come and speak to them. One vicar consented, and then had to withdraw from his promise, because he said if he came his action 'would be misunderstood by his own people.'¹ Nonconformity must take its share of blame for all narrowness and bigotry and uncharitableness. I only want to say this fissure is accounted for by a very low state of grace in the hearts of those who 'profess and call themselves Christians.' When the new corn begins to shoot from the earth, the black ground which divides stem from stem is much in evidence; but when the 'full

¹ Since these words were written, but not as a result of them, Dr. Guy Warman, Vicar of Bradford, has promised to address the Brotherhood. He will be left in no doubt of the sincerity of his welcome.

corn in the ear ' has come, these divisions are hidden from sight, and it is one field of waving golden corn, bowing in the same direction before the same wind. So shall it be, when men's hearts are full of grace; those who seek their way to Zion shall turn their faces ' thitherward,' and not appear with a menacing gaze turned towards each other.

Will you help forward this glorious day? Let this fissure be healed. Then will our Lord's unanswered prayer become answered: ' That they all may be one : as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us ; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.'

One word more. Every step we travel nearer to Christ the more will this gaping fissure begin to close, and the unity for which we pray begin to appear.

XXI

JUBAL AND TUBAL

‘ THEY must be brothers, they are so much alike ! ’ That statement is as frequently false as true. Perhaps we continue repeating it because the wish is father to the thought. Yet dissimilarities and antagonisms are well-marked family features, and brothers may be as easily discovered by them as by their identities. The family-tree manifests such varieties in its offshoots that greater anomalies meet us than the gathering of grapes of thorns or figs of thistles.

In Parliament you have brothers sitting on opposite sides of the House. In religion it would be easy to find instances where parents include Romanists and Protestants, Plymouth Brethren and Christian Scientists, amongst their children. In temperaments the variety is greater still, for there are the phlegmatic and the melancholy, the sanguine and the morose, the active and the passive, all dwelling together, not perhaps in unity, but with sufficient expression to keep them all in evidence. One fact must, however, be borne in mind, that this

is no modern development, and therefore cannot be regarded as a recent tendency. It is as old as the human family. Once I read a book entitled *The Harmony of Opposites*. Outside that book I have never witnessed the 'harmony,' but I have faith to believe it will be one of the signs of the coming of the golden age which is yet to be.

Lamech must have been startled by the variety of his sons. There is a similarity in their names, for one was Jubal and the other Tubal; but there the similarity ends, for Jubal handled the harp, whilst Tubal was the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron. In other words, one was a professor of music and the other was a blacksmith.

The tendency of unlike things is to separate. It would not be surprising if Jubal and Tubal never spoke to each other. How could you expect blacksmiths and musicians to be bosom companions?

Lives, like wireless telegraphy, seem only to influence those to which they are keyed. We often say of men with whom we have nothing in common that we leave them alone. Would it not be wiser if we recognized our own lack, which they could well supply?

Because men have opposite temperaments, that is no reason why they should separate from each other and dwell apart; and when you say, 'I do not like that man, for I have nothing in common

with him,' it must not be interpreted as meaning that you are a saint and he the sinner. It would be a great deal wiser to lessen your defects by partaking of his excellences.

The Limitations of Strength.

It is not by chance that the Lion Rampant has now become our national emblem. It is the acknowledgement of the fact that we revere strength. The blacksmith secures a popularity that is denied to men who find their vocation in gentler callings. The man of fine physique commands universal admiration.

It is right that it should be so, for these are days when strong men are needed. Gilt-edged securities are losing their value, because it is discovered that gilt is not gold; but strength is in no danger of disparagement. We cannot afford to be coquetting with sentiment or to be lavishing admiration upon tears. The giant can always hold his own. We have strong men in our land who have hurled mountains of iniquity from their seats, and who have faced the fury of a mob with as little tremor as a mountain in a thunderstorm. The great moral victories of the world have been won for us by strong men who have been able to twist the iron of opposition and bend it to their will. And yet sheer strength, without the baptism of gentler qualities,

has never really won our heart. It is difficult to picture the blacksmith as the gentle lover, and yet love is needed as much as strength. Napoleon was a strong man, strong in intellect and in will, inspiring courage and fear, yes, and even admiration, but not love. Leopold, King of the Belgians, stood forth as one of the strongest physiques in Europe, a dominating personality, and many trembled in his presence; but it is no libel upon his memory to say that he died 'unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.'

I know 'merchant princes.' How strong they are, but how unattractive! They speak of themselves as 'self-made men.' I do not like the phrase, and yet it at once acknowledges that they do not make God responsible for what they are. They are strong men. Before to-day I have seen small vessels beaten and broken to bits as they have been dashed in the storm against the rocks. And I have seen not a few of the men against whom smaller men, but not less virtuous, have been broken. To change my illustration, these strong men remind me of the elephant and rhinoceros, trampling down in their supreme strength everything that comes in their way as they go to quench their thirst in the river which they seem to imagine exists only for them. I never witness sheer strength but I see superciliousness and contempt lurking in ambush. This is no

disparagement of strength ; it is simply declaring that it carries its own dangers. I heard a mother complain of her otherwise excellent son that he could not sit on a chair but he loosened the legs, that if he leaned against a door he put his shoulder through the glass, that he did not know his own strength. What a blessing it would be if every Tubal would endeavour to find Jubal, his brother !

The Shallowness of the Ornamentals.

There was a wonderful providence in the father of musical instruments springing up in the same home that gave birth to the blacksmith. The world would be very dreary if it were not for the arts, the decorations, and the confections of life. I remember hearing a lady say in a superb drawing-room, decorated with sumptuous things, ' I could not live without the elegancies of life ' ; but as she said the words I measured their limitation, for, on the one hand, I knew she could not LIVE on ' elegancies,' and, on the other, she would never have had them if it had not been that her husband had been well endowed with the qualities of strength. How Marie Antoinette craved the ' elegancies of life ' when she issued her order that the halt and the maimed and the blind should for ever be kept from her sight ! But it will not do. Life is more than surface—it is depth ; more than splendour—it is tragedy ; far

more than a new song or a night at the opera. Nevertheless we lose enormously when there is no appreciation of the artistries of life. If every father were like Mr. Gradgrind, who said, 'I do not want the beautiful; I only want the durable,' what a dull grey thing life would be!

I know one man who for years was a Member of Parliament, and is now in the House of Lords; and I have heard him say, 'I owe it all to the charming winsomeness of my wife. Votes that had been refused me were promised to her the moment she made the request.' I know the lady, and can believe it. I would not like to think that every election has been decided by courtesy and charm, but I am equally sure these graces have determined some; and I am not sorry. Emerson bears witness to the same truth, for he has said, 'The Earl of Nasseau gained a subject every time he raised his hat.' This I know, that life would flow more easily for countless thousands if they too would plead guilty to an affection for the 'elegancies of life.'

Strength and Beauty.

To have the best of each you must have both; Jubal and Tubal must partake of each other's qualities. How much better if the blacksmith had been a bit of a musician and the musician a bit of a blacksmith! This is the age of 'combines.'

Some of them are iniquitous. This one is righteous. It is a combine of the virtues. A man must not call himself a millionaire in righteousness because one lonely virtue has taken up its abode in him. A little while ago I was privileged to see the grand old organ in Ludlow Parish Church, dating originally from the early years of the seventeenth century ; but it has been enlarged and improved many times, and men travel from far to hear its music. As I had the opportunity of seeing it I discovered how largely iron and steel had entered into its construction. It was a thing of strength. Then the organist played, and I forgot its strength in the beauty of its music. It was not strength without beauty, but the blending of the two. Once I remember the great Dr. Maclaren, of Manchester, addressing a meeting in the South of England ; and as he rose in front of a vast audience, with that delightful Scotch accent of his, he declared, ‘ I love to come to the South, because it is here where you can grow trees.’ How that audience cheered ! Then, after a pause, ‘ But in the North we grow—MEN ! ’ Then the audience forgot to cheer. Yes, sometimes I have been in the North country, and I have felt the wind blowing like a hurricane across the hills and valleys with a strength that seemed to carry all before it. In all sincerity I have said, ‘ This must be the place for growing men, but the landscape would be im-

proved by a few trees.' In the South I have pleaded with men to try to get a little iron in their blood, something that would take away their flabbiness and instability; but with no less intensity and earnestness do I plead with the men of the North to seek the gentler and kindlier side of life. It is not the one virtue the world needs to-day, but both; and one as much as the other.

If Carlyle's intellectual strength had been baptized with the gentleness and courtesy of the Christian gentleman, he might only have written half his books; but they would have been more potent for good than the whole library that bears his name. If only he had imparted a gentler spirit to his writings, baptizing his pages with 'otto of roses' instead of sprinkling them with cayenne pepper and sulphuric acid, they would have secured a mightier result. One old Puritan wrote, 'It may be necessary to give patients physic, but there is no reason why it should be given scalding hot.' Blood and iron, thunder and lightning, are not the all-powerful agents in human life. Faraday, that prince of scientists, declared there was more energy stored in a dewdrop than in a liberated thunderstorm. It has been proved that a bullet fired at a range of fifty yards into a snow-bank six feet wide is arrested and wooed into impotence. Think of it! Conquered by snowflakes! If you doubt it, ask Napoleon. He could

bear emphatic testimony to the fact that all his militarism was conquered and himself broken by the snows of winter.

If your weakness be to glory in your strength, then call in the aid of gentleness. If you pride yourself upon the ornamentals of life, and flatter yourself that you are a gentleman, then make sure that your gentlemanliness is deeper than your waistcoat.

XXII

AN UNCOMFORTABLE BED

WHEN an ancient prophet desired to describe the acme of misery, he pictured a man lying upon a bed too short, with clothes that were too narrow. Modern journalism could not surpass that illustration for brilliance or completeness.

The luxury of a comfortable bed is known best by those who have to try the other kind. A bed upon which a man cannot fully stretch himself, with clothes that only reach the feet by leaving the shoulders uncovered, is a condition of wretchedness that cannot be well surpassed. The only amelioration lies in the fact that no eye beholds the discomfort, for it is endured in the dark.

It is an apt simile for the ancient prophet to use, for there were those who had made for themselves defences and treaties which they imagined would secure their comfort and safety. They never troubled themselves concerning the attitude of God. Isaiah declares that all such devices resemble a bed that 'is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in it.'

The ancient picture is truly modern, for men to-day are fortifying themselves with treaties and covenants that will prove as unsatisfactory and as little comforting as short beds and narrow clothes.

There is the Man who makes his Alliance with Money, and then lies down to rest.

What a cruel disillusionment to discover he is too big for his bed ! He is not to be denounced, but pitied. He has been honestly convinced that money would meet every requirement ; and, possessing it, he could lie down and rest. That man must be enlightened, not blamed. He at least deserves sympathy as much as the impracticable, sentimental creature who goes through life declaring that ' money is nothing,' and always contrives to live up to the edge of his income and often beyond it ; who says, ' Let me enjoy the present, and never mind the future.' He is the one who never thinks of purchasing an umbrella for himself because he relies upon borrowing yours on the day when you need it most ! There are many who prefer to enjoy other people's savings, and who have no guilty conscience when they repose upon other people's efforts rather than upon their own. Some day they will discover their awakening is less comfortable than they anticipated.

It is not, however, of these I am thinking, but

rather of those who value money so greatly that they would make their bed upon it. They will tell you it is by money the table is spread, the body clothed, the home furnished, the walls decorated. Money secures the rendering of service ; for money artists will paint and scholars produce the results of their toil. Money enables men to cross the seas and behold the wonderful lands which are stretched beneath the distant skies. Money will bring treasures from foreign shores to our own. Money enables men to search for health in sunnier climes, and procures the greatest physicians of the world. It is not surprising if men say to their money, ' Be thou my bed ; I will lie down and be at rest.' It is only when he lies upon it with all his weight and size that the disappointment begins ; he is too big for his bed.

Money cannot avert the temporal calamities of life, or heal the sorrows that are ' too deep for tears.' Money cannot bring back the years that have sped, or cause the years that are yet to be to travel more leisurely than those that are gone. Money can purchase life's lowest things, but the highest are beyond its reach ; they are not purchasable at a market counter. Leisure and position may be procured by gold, but not one drop of mother-love can come that way. Man is a creature of countless needs ; his measurement is beyond the measurement

of earth ; he is too big to find repose upon a bed of gold. A mother came to me exultingly, and declared, ' My son has had a good stroke of fortune, and is now right for life.' I said, ' Thank God for that ! When did he find the Saviour ? ' ' Oh,' she said, ' I did not mean that. I meant he had been made a partner in a good business ! ' But no man is right for life until he has found God. You may be as rich as Croesus, and lie upon a bed of gold and have golden coverlets, but that is no guarantee of rest. King Ahasuerus had all this and more, yet there came to him the agony of sleeplessness, for of him we read, ' On that night could not the king sleep.' Money is good ; it is a partial blessing ; but it is worse than useless if you think it is a bed upon which your whole manhood, body, soul, and spirit, can slumber and be at rest. It is a bed too short for a complete man.

**There is the Man who makes his Alliance with the
Mind, and lies down to rest.**

No one outside an asylum would disparage the human mind, but he is travelling perilously near one who imagines that within the province of the mind the whole being may lie down and be at rest. He who is no bigger than his brain may sleep in his hat, but if he desires rest of soul and spirit he will require mightier accommodation. The man who

does not develop his brain or cultivate his intellect is of little value in the world ; his counsels are not sought, and as a force in life he does not count. There is, however, the other side. To ally oneself with intellect, to cultivate reason alone, to equip simply the mental side of nature, and to imagine that in mere cleverness there is a refuge upon which a man may lie down and be at rest, is to discover that his bed is too short and the coverings too narrow for the repose of the whole man.

Biography is one of the greatest teachers of mankind ; its pages are full of object-lessons to the one who would learn. Read the life-story of Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford. He frankly admits that he has no history but a mental history ; all his energy was devoted to intellectual pursuits. He became a mighty repository for human learning, and gained high position. But you are soon aware that in it all there is the note of disappointment and of dissatisfaction. He is conscious of his own narrowness and the fewness of his interests ; his judgements of people were continually at fault, all because he had no standard but an intellectual one.

You have the same lesson in the life of Darwin, so absorbed in the scientific that he lost interest in the things that were not exclusively intellectual. No one, not even his biographer, was so sensible

as himself of the poverty of his life. No man disparages his intellect or its attainments ; it was mighty, but it was not big enough for the repose of his complete manhood. Huxley walked the same path, and came largely to the same result. You cannot read far into his biography without being impressed with his disappointment and discontent. He did not believe as many of us believe, but there came a day when he turned to an earnest Christian friend and said how much he wished he could believe as he did. It was Huxley's confession that there was a part of his nature that was finding no rest, no repose, upon a narrow intellectual bed.

We find contrast with these in the life of Gladstone. His intellect was not smaller than those of whom we have spoken. Lord Salisbury said of him that ' his was the greatest intellect that had ever been given to the study of European politics.' He was a mental giant ; but if there is one thing more certain than another, it is that he did not make his bed on his intellectualism and feel at rest. It was not big enough to bring him repose. He found his rest not in the attainments of the intellect, but in the repose of his heart upon God. There is a part of life where intellectualism has nothing to say and less to give. A man with a broken heart, torn with anguish and sorrow, will find no rest by taking a dictionary for his pillow ; nor will the man whose

nature longs for the eternal, for the life beyond, find solace in lying down upon a bed of fossils, which, whilst speaking eloquently of the past, are dumb concerning the future. There is a part of your nature that will find all the intellectual attainments of the world and all the libraries of the universe a bed too narrow to bring rest to your complete life.

**There is the Man who makes his Alliance with
Morality, and lies down to rest.**

It is rest, however, that is associated with nightmare, and that because there are disturbed periods when he feels all is not well. This is no disparagement of morality. Some people speak of it as 'filthy rags.' Then I say boldly I prefer them to other people's satins. Morality is lovely; it is superb. Its only fault is its deficiency. There is not enough of it to furnish rest for all man's weary nature. The one who argues for the *sufficiency* of morality is really arguing for decency in sin. Morality without religion is really that negative species of virtue which consists in not doing what is scandalously depraved or wicked. There is no heart of holy principle in it. Morality is often simply selfishness well dressed and respectably kept, but nothing more. Such morality may satisfy others, but it brings no real rest to you. Morality is

neither more nor less than the mechanical ordering of life, and, however well done, it must fail for the simple reason that man is more than a machine.

I hear men say, ' I pay my debts, I keep my word, I maintain my family, I am loyal to my country, I indulge in no sins. What more can God want ? ' That is not the point. It is not what more God wants ; it is you that want more ! This morality does not bring you complete rest. I will tell you why. It is because these things are only names for outward behaviour, and you recognize the disparity, nay, the contradiction, between what you are within and without. You pay your bills ; are you quite sure you would pay them if your tradesman forgot to send in his accounts ? You keep moral laws ; are you quite sure you would keep them if there were no fear that breaking them might bring detection ? I have read that the Chinese have a marked preference for those dresses which conceal the figure ; but that fashion is not exclusively Chinese ; I have met with it in England ! We are all fond of the things that hide what we really are. Are you quite happy in your morality ? Have you no fear that you are being overhauled ? A man must toss very uncomfortably upon his bed when he remembers he is one person to his neighbour and quite another to his God.

Herodotus tells us of an ancient king who flew

into a rage because he could not sleep, for the rose leaves in his pillow had become crumpled ! The man who has secured his wealth and lies down to rest will find his rose leaves crumpled and slumber chased far away. He will discover there are things money will not buy, and no man will rest so little as the one who has trusted to money and then awakes to the fact that he is travelling to a realm where money is not the current coin. Intellectual achievements are great ; they are really noble. When, however, a man seeks to find rest for every part of his nature upon the mere accomplishments of his brain, he will discover there is an important section of his nature that is unrested, and which cries out for a peace that the triumphs of intellect cannot supply. The bed of intellect is too narrow to grant repose to the soul. O man, know yourself ; measure yourself, not according to the cubit, but according to the measurement of Him who made you in His own image and after His own likeness. Then you will know there can be no rest for a man, with faculties that are akin to the Eternal, in anything that is finite or partial or incomplete. No alliance with the world, no accumulation of wealth or knowledge, can supply the rest which in your best moments your heart craves. Sooner or later you will be obliged to recognize a man can rest nowhere if God be kept out of him. Whether you accept or reject

the invitation, it is only in 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' that you will find a bed upon which every part of your nature can be at peace.

XXIII

THE PERMANENCE OF CLASS DISTINCTIONS

MANY a noisy orator has gained his notoriety by his fiery invectives against the things which divide man from man. Angry crowds have been mollified by being told that the Man of Nazareth recognized no distinctions, that to Him there was no difference between one man and another, that to Him all were alike. No popularity for Jesus has ever been secured upon a more false foundation.

If a man seeks a place where all differences are obliterated, and where there are no class distinctions at all, it is useless for him to come to Christ. It is a fundamental blunder to imagine that in Christ all these things are wiped out like the ridges of sand by the oncoming tide. It is true that Christ abolishes certain distinctions between men, but what advantage is there in that if He establishes others that will last for ever? Christ enters no company but divisions immediately appear. It is not He who arbitrarily divides men; they divide themselves. So long as Jesus speaks as a philanthropist there is no division; everybody says, 'Hear, hear.' When He eulogizes

good conduct, men do not divide, because not even a rogue will be in audible opposition then. When, however, He penetrates into the inner realm of motive, then men grow restive and irritable. They complain, they challenge, they dispute, and the result of which I have spoken happens : there is a division between men. A man chooses his path and thereby divides himself from those who have chosen differently. You cannot make a choice without at the same time making a refusal. You cannot select a woman to be your wife without at the same moment publishing your rejection of all other women in the world. It is there where the trouble comes. No one would want to join a club that admitted everybody. The rules of admission are not less rules of exclusion, and they reveal the distinction between those who are in and those who are out. You would manifest insanity if you sought to join an insurance company that accepted all and sundry without medical examination or any other inquiry. It is false to say that Jesus abolishes distinctions ; He creates them, and they remain for ever. In Christ distinctions of colour and nationality vanish ; but there are others which become greater and greater. In Christ divisions between master and servant, wealth and poverty, are gone ; but the distinction between righteousness and wickedness is a mountain-range which can never be

obliterated. My counsel to you at the moment is to think less of the divisions which Christ removes but more of the distinctions which He creates and maintains.

There is the Distinction between those who see the Beauty of Christ and those who do not.

Men cannot walk together very far when they differ in their conception of Jesus. If you think this is unreasonable or untrue, try it upon lower levels. A difference in vision will create a distinction that cannot be removed. Two men may gaze upon the same flower ; but if one man looks upon it with the eye of an artist and the other with the eye of a market-gardener, they are more divided than if they lived upon different continents. Scenes of transcendent glory may become commonplace enough to the man who has everything except the power of vision, whilst things that are commonplace are bathed in glory to the man whose eye is pure. James Smetham said of Gerhard Dow that he always saw a halo over pickled cabbage ! Some people would tell us that art is transcription. It is not ; it is interpretation. Then how can there be community between those who can enter into the beauty and meaning of a picture and those who cannot ? Tennyson takes his walks abroad and

sees the 'flower in the crannied wall,' and holds converse with it :

Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Contrast this with Peter Bell, of whom Wordsworth says :

In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

If Tennyson and Peter Bell had joined in a walk together, what community could there have been between them? Upon one occasion in Rome it was my privilege to visit the great rooms of the Vatican, with their amazing treasures of literature and art and tapestry. Each succeeding room made me more and more eager for time and opportunity to remain to study, to examine, all I saw. Alas ! in the same company with us was a man who had described himself upon his papers as a 'gentleman farmer.' He walked the same rooms, saw the same works of art and of statuary that were seen by others ; but at every halt made he grumbled and asked the guide to 'hurry on,' or inquired how long it would be before the 'show was finished.' At last we stood in front of some ancient tapestry ; but the

grumbling still continued, till we found ourselves before a gory picture where two priests, with uplifted swords, were striking off the heads of those who would not submit to their priestly dominance. The victims fell ; the blood was running in rivers. Then our ' gentleman farmer ' smiled, and said, ' I feel at home now, just as if I were sticking pigs ! '

With all my democratic sympathies, I declare there is such a distinction between that man and myself that I would rather be locked in jail and sleep on a plank-bed than be found in the Vatican with him again. These distinctions you can do no other than acknowledge ; but if they are true on the lower levels of life, they are much more true on the higher. A whole universe rolls between the one who, gazing upon Jesus, declares, ' A root out of a dry ground,' and another who, looking upon Him, says, ' Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' The distinction may at first reveal itself as a narrow streamlet ; but it widens into a river, and at last, in the words of George Eliot, ' the river ends we know not where, and the sea begins and there is no more stepping on the shore.' Do not use all your energies in endeavouring to remove the merely temporal distinctions between Capital and Labour, and have no energy left to bring yourself and others to recognize the eternal distinction that must remain between those who say

when they see Jesus, 'There is no beauty that we should desire Him,' and those who say, 'My Lord and my God.'

There is the Distinction between those to whom the Religion of Christ is a Great Reality, and those to whom it is merely the Repetition of a Formal Creed.

If religion were a violation of what society regards as 'good taste,' what a depletion there would be in church attendance! Lord Melbourne would have considered himself insulted if any one had said he was not a Christian. Doubtless, according to the standards around him, he could have made good his claim. He proclaimed, however, his conception of the Christian religion when he declared, 'It is monstrous that religion should be allowed to interfere with a man's private life.' A very-much-man-of-the-world said to me recently, 'I can do with religion providing that it is not carried too far.' I asked how far he would have it carried, where he would put the boundaries beyond which religion must not go? The only answer that came was that he 'knew how to keep religion to himself.' I congratulated him upon belonging to the largest religious denomination in the world. These religionists may see much. One thing they miss seeing is the mighty distinction between themselves and those who put into practice the 'truths they have embraced,' who

live through the Saviour and find their only delight in doing His will.

I have read somewhere that when General Gordon was leading his ever-victorious army against the Chinese rebels, one of the opposing generals determined that he would strike dismay into the heart of the gallant Englishman and his troops by a ruse. He purchased two thousand pairs of European boots and shod his soldiers with them, and believed that the footprints they left behind would make Gordon think that he also had a large contingent of European soldiers at his command. The boots were all right ; but the men who stood in them cut such sorry figures, and danced such antics, that never for a moment was Gordon led to believe that he was up against a new generation of Waterloo veterans or Balaclava heroes. The method was too theatrical to carry conviction. But, the difference between those Chinese soldiers in European footwear and Gordon's brave men was not so great as the distinction between genuine Christians and those who profess to be such, but who are only dancing the antics of the evil one in Christian garb. They deceive no one but themselves.

Unless your faith prevents you from doing the devil's work, it is of no service. It is not the faith you profess, but the faith by which you live, that will determine your destiny. So once again we

come right up to the distinction between those who are really regenerated and made new, and those who at best are only clothed in the garments of the faith to which they have no right.

There is the Distinction which Jesus does not Create, but which His Presence Immediately Reveals.

All that happens is that when Jesus comes men divide themselves. Each goes to his own place and amongst his own people. It is not wealth or culture or knowledge that decides your destiny ; it is your relationship to Christ. Men often complain of the number of religious denominations in the world. Has it ever occurred to you that in the presence of Jesus they become wonderfully less ? When men set out to climb the Pyramid from different sides, it is at the base they are farthest apart. Every ascending step brings them nearer to each other, though they see it not, until they unite at the summit. The distinctions between men whose hearts are full of love to Christ are not worth thinking about. The presence of Jesus acts like magic amongst men. When He appears He unites men who are divided from each other by all kinds of social barriers.

Think about the apostolate. With all those differing temperaments and varieties of disposition,

how they held together ! No other power in the world could have welded those men into unity but Jesus. He also unites those whom long-standing jealousies and hatreds and mistrust of each other have kept apart. Scribes and Pharisees, who had long been antagonists, are united now in a common bond of hostility against Jesus. Pilate and Herod are made friends together. What an unholy friendship that was ! Think of it ! Made friends in their hostility to the Lord of Life ! It may be that you object to being classed with Pilate or Herod or Judas or the impenitent thief, but your objection to their company counts for nothing. The fact is when Jesus comes He lessens class distinctions ; He reduces them to two, but those two remain. He does not appoint you your place ; you select your own. When He comes you declare yourself as with the sheep upon the right hand or the goats upon the left. He comes, and men of pious exteriors immediately reveal their guilty souls. In the presence of Jesus the priest reveals his malice, the Pharisee his hardness, and Judas his greed. Yet these men were the respectables until Jesus came. The other side is not less true. Zacchaeus, the man despised, and outside all social courtesies, no sooner sees Jesus than he proves himself to be a true son of Abraham. The woman that was a sinner sees Jesus, and at once wins for herself unforgettable renown. Thomas,

by nature a doubter, sees Jesus, and at once proves that his faith is deeper than his doubt. Jesus is here now. Are you angry because you are told there is only one distinction concerning which you need to be anxious, and that now you are fixing your own destiny? Do you not see that to be out of friends with all for which Jesus stands must place you outside the light of His presence, but to be loyal to His words and obedient to His truth is to place yourself where He is? **AND WHERE HE IS THERE IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL.**

XXIV

HOW DISPOSITION COUNTS

No magazine literature is more popular than that which tells how certain men have climbed to positions of prominence and power. Aspirants eager to ascend have been students of such literature—often enough, alas, with disappointing results. The instructions have been confusing and the personal qualities have been lacking.

Some would tell us it is by money that power is reached ; some believe that social influence is the key which unlocks the door of the seats of the mighty ; whilst others declare it is by knowledge that the uplands are attained. Thus it happens that in the multitude of magazine-counsellors there is not wisdom, but confusion. The would-be potentates find themselves amid a maze of conflicting signposts. It is from these very much up-to-date magazines that I would draw your attention to an old-world story, a story so much behind the times that you will have to travel backwards and backwards over the graves of your ancestors for many generations before you come to the period to which it belongs.

It is the story of a man who secured so much promotion that even presidents and princes felt themselves flung into the rear. Do not be disappointed when I tell you that his name is Daniel. The story is not less true because it is in the Bible. Some, I know, would tell you that the story is mythical. They say there never was a den and never were any lions, and some even deny that there ever was a Daniel. For my part I believe there were all three. The most interesting point in the story is not that the lions did not eat Daniel when they had the chance, but that as a matter of fact they never had the chance. There was too much backbone in him. I admit it would be dangerous for some to venture where Daniel could fearlessly go. Backbone is one thing to a lion, but gristle is quite another.

To me the arrestive fact about Daniel is the explanation of his promotion. Did you ever hear words like these: 'Then this Daniel was preferred above presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him'? This 'excellent spirit' made him independent of patronage, and just sent him romping over all rivals and competitors. Others, perhaps, could have rivalled him in wealth or culture or social position, but where 'an excellent spirit' was to be the determining factor he was indubitably supreme.

Daniel's 'excellent spirit' revealed itself in the trials through which he passed. You cannot judge of a man's spirit when he is getting everything his own way. We can all be delightful when we are pleased, but are not so charming to look upon when we are vexed. To retain 'an excellent spirit' in a losing game is, at least, to merit victory.

Daniel's First Trial was concerning his Menu.

He was expected to eat of the king's meat. This he was resolved not to do ; he preferred plain living and high thinking to the reverse. We read Daniel *purposed* in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, therefore he *requested* that he might not defile himself. That sounds like an anti-climax. First he says he purposed, and then he requested ! But he was not less determined because he 'requested.' He purposed, but he purposed with a smile ; time enough to frown when your purpose is thwarted. Daniel discovered the method of gaining his end and making friends at the same time. How much better than losing your purpose and creating enemies ! He purposed and requested—that is to say, he was a Nonconformist ; but he was gentlemanly in it all.

We have known Nonconformists who have gone about 'breathing out threatenings and slaughter.' They have been so great upon their religious scruples

that people have only discovered their scruples and have missed the religion. Once I visited a Welsh town to preach upon the Sabbath day. I arrived upon the Saturday evening, and reached the house where I supposed I should be entertained. In answer to my knock, the door was opened by a venerable man. I inquired if he expected the preacher for the morrow. He replied, 'I cannot say until I know whether you have been buried with the Lord in baptism or not.' To that I replied that I had certainly been baptized as an infant. The only further reply was a slammed door! I stood irresolute, knowing not which way to turn. As I hesitated I heard a voice say, 'Father, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Mother wishes the preacher to stay with us, if you do not.' With that the door opened, and I received an invitation in the mother's name to enter. I entered gladly, and that night mother and daughter and myself sat at one table whilst his Right Reverend Narrowness sat at another. I asked one blessing upon the food we were to enjoy; he asked another. I never doubted his sincerity; but I have no hesitation in saying that his religion was of a pattern that no one was likely to want save himself. It was a drug on the market; but it taught me the lesson that the kingdom of heaven may be as much retarded by an unattractive goodness as by downright wickedness.

We are sometimes told that goodness is everything ; but it is not, for there is some goodness that does not go deep enough and that does not ascend high enough. I remember a builder who laid the foundations of a row of houses, and the foundations were well and truly laid ; but, alas, he ran short of money, and the houses never went farther than the foundations. They were good so far as they went, but they did not go far enough. So with some Christians I have known. They have been all foundations and nothing more. Unless your religion makes you gracious and turns you into a gentleman in the best sense, unless you know how to purpose and yet *request*, you had better inquire if you are not laying claim prematurely to the sacred title CHRISTIAN.

Daniel's Second Trial was when he was called upon to be the Benefactor to his King.

The 'excellent spirit' shines forth in all its splendour here. Daniel is made a Privy Councillor. That was enough to make him feel that he had far outstripped his friends ; but, instead of wrapping the proud secret in his breast, he takes them into his confidence. He makes them partners in the work in hand. What an example for this age of monopoly to copy ! What 'an excellent spirit' for a man to manifest who will claim no privilege without

stretching forth a hand that he may raise others also! What a blessing it would be if men who are so eager to push themselves to the front would remember that it means forcing others to the back who, in all probability, like the 'back benches' as little as themselves! Upon one occasion I went to a house of mourning to conduct a funeral, and as I entered I heard the sound of angry quarrelling. I was amazed, and thought I had mistaken the place. I have known many quarrels *after* funerals, but never one immediately before. I was upon the point of making inquiries, when my doubts were set at ease by hearing one voice, louder than all the rest, declare, 'Unless I can ride in the front coach I shall ride in none!' I had to quell the noisy man by reminding him that the front coach was the hearse, and that he had better smooth his temper before he sought that promotion. He may have had genuine sorrow at the death of his friend, but the excellence of spirit was not manifest.

Once again, when Daniel is ready to render the service to his king we notice that he gives to God the glory for the knowledge he has. It is the unobtrusiveness of Daniel's piety that charms me. The rendering of a service to another always carries with it a great revelation of character.

A lad who had fallen upon evil times came to me for help. I said, 'Why not turn to your father, who

has wealth enough at his disposal? ' His only reply was, ' Never again. The last time I wrote to him he sent me a cheque for £10 and—this LETTER ! ' I read that letter, and my face burns even now with the recollection of it. I would rather lose both my hands than ever write so cruel a letter. Tolstoy tells of a man who once accosted him as a beggar and to whom he gave nothing. The man dropped upon his knees, and said, ' Thank you.' Tolstoy said, ' Why thank me? I gave you nothing.' ' No,' said the man, ' but you made me feel that you were sorry for me, and that was enough.' You can bestow your charities until they resemble nothing so much as bones thrown to dogs, or you can so give as to make the recipient think of God and of heaven ; but it takes the ' excellent spirit ' to do it.

Daniel's Third Trial was when he had to produce such Evidence of his Religion that Men would trust.

The trial was that he had either to live thirty days without prayer, or go into the den of lions. And we are told he simply did as he had done ' AFORETIME '—that is, he neither obtruded nor hid his piety. There is no more important knowledge for any Christian than for him to know how to manifest his religion. I once saw a book entitled *Roses : How to Grow Them and How to Show Them*. I said to myself, ' What an absurd title ! Anybody

can show roses if he only knows how to grow them.' Some time afterwards I had a rose so pushed into my face that I missed the fragrance, but I felt the thorn! Since then I have understood the need of learning how to show roses!

I have long ago lost my admiration for the Christians who are called 'diamonds in the rough,' because their roughness is so much in evidence that the diamond is quite obscured, and also because I know that a diamond in the rough is not worth half so much as the polished stone. Some manifest their religion as if it were a doleful business, like Dr. Jowett's landlady, who always insisted upon locking up the piano on a Saturday night and unlocking the harmonium. How well that reminds me of people I have known who have prayed like harmoniums until all who heard them have thought they have been in pain! That will win no disciples to your Lord and mine. Seek the 'excellent spirit,' and it will go forth from you like fragrance from a rose, and men will be grateful for it. The 'excellent spirit' will win converts when sermons and catechisms will utterly fail. If you doubt it, try it, and try it now.

XXV

PATRIOTISM IN PRACTICE

PATRIOTISM is so enormously popular that if we are not careful we shall be overwhelmed with worthless imitations. London guards with care the standard weights and measures by which every tradesman's yard-stick and scales are tested. This is for the safeguarding of the customers. Perhaps not all customers deserve the safeguarding that is secured for them ; many have been large purchasers of what they have known to be nothing better than glittering imitations and fair-faced frauds. Virtues are gilt-edged securities that not even world-wide wars can depreciate.

Patriotism is one of these virtues, and so greatly is it in demand that not a few who are traitors to their country are masquerading in patriotic guise. To sing patriotic songs, to organize patriotic plays, or to preach patriotic sermons is no proof of patriotism. Patriotism is not a matter of singing or acting or preaching ; it is sacrifice and suffering. Patriotism does not consist in damning your enemy ; it consists in having the loftiest national ideals, and sacrificing everything, if need be life itself, in their attainment. We had better find a standard patriot

and compare ourselves with him before we wear the king's uniform any more. In order that you may know I am seeking no favour, I choose my sample patriot from the mighty dead; and lest I should offend the susceptibilities of any, I will select one from an unrepresented nation—a Jew! My choice falls upon Nehemiah, who arrests my attention by the fact that he forgoes his salary for love's sake. I have heard men declare they 'have much pleasure in proposing a handsome reduction in salary' for some poor individual who has not been present; but here is a man who proposed not the reduction of another man's salary, but the surrender of his own. Such a man demands attention, for we live in an age when so many are great advocates for practising economy—on other people. This man proved the excellence of his theories upon himself.

Here is the story in a word or two. There had come a breach in the walls of Jerusalem, and Nehemiah determined that his task should be the rebuilding of the walls. He met with a varied and violent opposition. Nothing, however, could move him from his purpose.

Nehemiah's Patriotism was Expressed in the Fulfilment of Duty.

He was attacked by slander. It was said he was only doing the work in order that he might be made

king. He was attacked by ridicule, for he was told that when he had finished his wall, if a fox jumped upon it, it would tumble down. These attacks were soon repulsed. Then came the severest of all attacks, because the most subtle. His opponents asked him to join a committee! That was a very subtle temptation which would test the fibre of most men; so many prefer to join a committee than do any work. It is so much easier to talk than to toil; this can be accomplished without perspiration or exhaustion, and even 'overtime' is regarded as no hardship. This was the supreme renunciation, for multitudes would rather SIT on a committee than STAND UP to a bench. Nehemiah's scornful answer was, 'I am doing a great work; I will not come down.' Yet Nehemiah *was* a member of a committee from which he would not resign, for he was the only member upon it. He was a great believer in a committee of one, for we read of him saying, 'I consulted with myself.' It was in this committee that he decided upon the nature of his patriotism. He came to the conclusion that he was doing a 'great work.' Surely he was mistaken, for he was only rebuilding a wall, and in our day that is called brick-laying; and yet he calls it a 'great work.' Either he was mistaken, or he had a vision denied to others.

The fact is Nehemiah lost sight of bricks and mortar, and saw only the grander vision of a restored

city. You cannot estimate a man's work until you see it from his point of view. The true patriot is the man who is willing to vacate positions of outward splendour and to engage, if need be, in menial tasks when animated with a sublime purpose. It is the purpose for which a man toils that determines the quality of his patriotism. Happy are we if, when measured by Nehemiah's standard, we have no need to be ashamed. Nehemiah knew that his wall-building was to secure the exclusion of the evil and the retention of the good.

A gentleman asked me one day if I had a garden. I answered, 'Not an inch.' Somewhile afterwards he called at my house, and as I stood bidding him farewell from my door he waved his hand over the grass, and said, 'I thought you had no garden.' It looked as if I had said what was not true. At that moment there came three dogs scampering wildly over the grass, scraping it with their feet and turning the place into a waste. Then a gust of wind blew, and swept fragments of paper and rubbish from the roadway and deposited them at our feet. 'Ah!' said my friend, 'what you need is a wall.' That is exactly what I do need, a wall to prevent invasion of rubbish from without and to preserve sanctity within.

Measure your patriotism by this standard, and how do you appear? I do not believe in the

patriotism of those who only manifest it by the pulling down of walls and the demolition of boundaries. Are you breaking down or building up the walls that God has placed around our national and personal life? Do not forget God has placed a wall around every man, that in every life there may be a sacred enclosure, and around every nation a still higher wall within whose boundary there may be honour and integrity, purity and sanctity. The true patriot is the man who seeks to keep the walls in good repair; all other so-called patriotism is but worthless bluster.

Nehemiah's Patriotism was Expressed in Resisting Temptation.

He vanquished it by vigorous toil; he was so busy he had no time to dwell upon the temptations that presented themselves to him. If Nehemiah had been an idler, he would have been turned from his object by slander; or if he had risen above that, he would, like many another, have capitulated before ridicule. To be told that a fox stepping on his wall would bring it down would reflect upon his dignity, and to avoid satirical banter he would return to the security of his government position. If victorious over these temptations, you may be sure, if an idler, he would have jumped at the chance of joining a committee! To reach dignity without hard labour

is 'a bourne from whence no traveller returns.' Here, however, is patriotism of a new pattern, which involved service to the community, the creation and building up of ideals which made him so busy that he was able to keep at bay a whole host of temptations. Oh, the beatitude of being busy, the omnipotence of occupation, especially for others! No idler can be a true patriot. His soul would be the dumping ground for all the miserable lusts and evil dispositions and self-seekings and jealousies that are hatched in hell. The idler is the prey of everything that works for the ruin of his nation and himself.

When Matthew Arnold desired to describe how the conquests of Imperial Rome failed to disturb the calm of the Oriental peoples whom she had subdued and governed, he expressed himself in verse :

The East bowed low before the blast,
In patient, deep disdain :
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

A whole tumult of temptations will pass harmlessly over you if only you are busy with the sublime tasks for the betterment and ennoblement of yourself and your nation. The closing verses of St. Mark's Gospel came recently to me with amazing freshness and force, for this is the promise that I read, 'They shall cast out devils; they shall take

up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.' I ask, Who are the ones who are to be able to mix and mingle with the evils of life without contamination? Who are the ones who are to drive devils out of the land? Who are the ones who are to have this glorious immunity from the thralldom of vice? The answer is at hand: the promise is for those who 'go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' That is it. Be busy in propagating righteousness, in publishing the good news of deliverance from evil and of men's kinship with God, and you, like Nehemiah, occupied in a great work, shall bid defiance to all the emissaries of the devil.

Nehemiah's Patriotism was Expressed in Discovering a Mighty Pavilion in Time of Peril.

Nehemiah learned what we shall have to learn sooner or later, and that is, that the only pavilion of safety lies in character.

I have read in Herodotus that the Lacedaemonians sent to Sardis to warn Cyrus not to injure any city on Grecian territory, for if he did it would not be passed by unnoticed. When the herald had given his message, Cyrus inquired from the men about him who the Lacedaemonians were, and what were their customs, that they should send such a message to him. When he had been informed, he said to the

Spartan herald, 'Go your way. I was never yet afraid of those who in the midst of the city have a place set apart in which they collect and administer false oaths. If I continue in health, it is not the calamities of the Ionians that shall be talked about, but your own.' When there is corruption in the heart of a city, its destruction is imminent. I have faith to believe that there shall yet dawn a golden age when righteousness shall have triumphed over all its foes, and when everything that defileth or worketh abomination or maketh a lie shall have gone down into the bottomless abyss for ever and ever. Men, if you are patriots, not of the 'pot-house' order, but of the pattern of Nehemiah, guard yourselves and your nation by the invulnerable walls of righteousness, and sustain yourselves by holy living; and then at last you shall find yourselves inhabitants of the City of God which abideth for ever.

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